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THE CONDUCT

OF

THE ADMINISTRATION.

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D. d. Child. Esq  
with the request of my  
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## CONDUCT OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### INTRODUCTION.

IN less than two months from this time, the country will pass through an important political crisis. A community of more than twelve million souls will be called on to elect, by a nearly universal suffrage, a chief Executive Magistrate, who is to exercise over them most of the powers that belong in other countries to the office of an hereditary sovereign. A proceeding of this kind is entirely without parallel in the previous history of the world, and were it to happen in some remote foreign nation, would be justly entitled to profound and anxious attention, as a mere experiment in the science of civil polity. When we recollect that this great and curious experiment is to be performed upon the living body politic of which we are ourselves members; that the fortunes of our country, and with them our own and those of our friends and families are involved to a considerable extent, in its results;—we shall perhaps consider it not unnatural to suspend for a few moments the ordinary routine of private business, and inquire with some seriousness into the nature of the duties which the crisis in question will devolve upon us as electors and citizens.

We have said that there is nothing in the history of the world at all parallel to this singular and imposing scene. There have been, no doubt, and still are, other communities organized on the principle of an elective chief magistracy. Such was the case with the great Republics of Rome and Carthage, with most of the democracies of ancient Greece and modern Italy, with Switzerland and Holland, and at one period with the unfortunate Kingdom of Poland. But in all these countries the state of the com-

munity and the form under which the elective principle was applied, were so totally different that it is impossible for us to turn them to any practical account as precedents : the case is entirely new.

No precise parallel to it can be found, even in the preceding elections of the same kind, that have taken place among ourselves. The state of the country changes so rapidly that in the short space of four years new forces are introduced into our political machinery of which it is impossible to calculate beforehand the operation or the effects. At the first election we had only thirteen States ; we have now four and twenty.—When Mr. Jefferson was chosen President we had less than six million inhabitants ; we, have now by the census more than twelve, and in reality more than thirteen. At all the earlier elections our largest cities did not contain more than twenty or thirty thousand inhabitants ; they now contain more than two hundred thousand, and have begun to assume in consequence a different physiognomy, and to exercise a different action on community. Before the year 1800, the West was a vast wilderness ; it now holds the balance of political power among the States, and expects at no distant day to sway the sceptre. Since the last election it has received from the new census a considerable augmentation of strength. These changes and various others hardly less important, to which we cannot even allude, have materially varied the political aspect of the country from one election to another, and will continue to render them all, as they successfully occur, operations of a new impression, involving elements that have never been in action before, and of which the nature and effects can of course be foreseen with very little certainty.

This indisputable fact gives an additional and alarming interest to a crisis already in its very nature sufficiently important.—We are like mariners compelled to pass through a dangerous channel, where the sands are continually shifting, and where the charts that have been formed upon the experience of former voyages are necessarily more or less incorrect. Under these circumstances, it would be madness to indulge in a false security. We must be on the alert, and keep a bright look-out for breakers, or we shall certainly get into shoal water.

We are met, however, at the outset by the objection, that it is after all of little importance what individual fills the office of President. One person, it is said, will go through the routine of this place about as well as another ; or if there be a difference, it will not be sufficiently important to affect in any way the great interests of the country. We are now so flourishing and prosperous that we can get along perfectly well under any chief

magistrate, and it is not worth while for the citizens to leave their own concerns for the sake of interfering in an election, of which the result is necessarily a matter of indifference.

Such language, though employed in most cases as a cover for selfishness, indolence or disguised Jacksonism, is occasionally heard from the mouths of well-meaning men. No error can be more ruinous in a government like ours, the very existence of which depends upon the constant vigilance of the people. The *administration of the government* is in fact the *great concern* of the community and of all its members. Upon it depend the maintenance of the public peace—the security of the life, property and happiness of the individual citizen. No temporal interest can be named in comparison with it for importance and magnitude. Education, for example, which is often and justly represented as a most important concern, is nevertheless entirely secondary and subordinate to that of Government. Education provides for the improvement of a future generation: Government secures the existence and prosperous condition of the present, which involves of course those of all that are to follow.—Of what use is it to provide accomplished actors, to figure some thirty years hence on the great theatre of society, if in the mean time, by the effect of misgovernment, the edifice itself is shaken to its basis and tumbles in fragments about our ears? Government therefore is the great and paramount concern. Religion alone, which provides for the wants of man considered as an immortal being, is of more importance than any merely temporal interest: and it is the chief practical injunction of Religion that we are not to wrap ourselves up in a cold, heartless, exclusive attention to our personal affairs, but to discharge with zeal, industry, vigilance and effect, our *social duties*.

In periods of general political prosperity, we are apt to undervalue the importance of Government, and to neglect the cares and duties that belong to it, just as in a healthy and vigorous state of the body we are apt to underrate the importance of temperance and exercise. “Why,” says the vigorous and athletic youth, “should I trouble myself with any of these idle restrictions? I have an excellent constitution; no matter what I do: I can bear any thing.” Let him try this system for two or three years—give way without restraint or reflection to his vicious appetites, and what will be the consequence? His animal functions are all disordered. Disease visits him in twenty loathsome shapes. He must now withdraw his attention from every other occupation, and direct it entirely to the vain and hopeless labor of attempting to *recover* the blessing, which he undervalued before, and which he has now lost forever.

Just so it is with the body politic. Every thing flourishes:—we have an excellent constitution:—we can bear any thing:—no matter who is President. Thus says the optimist; and, without even taking the trouble to vote, he goes on quietly increasing the number of his dollars. In the mean time, the agents of evil never slumber, and the helm which the well-meaning citizen is too indolent to grasp, falls into the hands of the Hills, the Kendalls and the Lewises, who make a President to their minds, and then make themselves Vice Presidents over him, under the style and title of the *Kitchen Cabinet*. Let this go on for a few years and what follows?—Proscription—Confiscation—internal dissension, foreign and domestic war. The optimist, who could not afford an hour or a dollar for the public affairs, must shell out his dollars by thousands, and pour out his heart's blood to the last drop—for what? In the hopeless attempt to *recover* the political well-being which, once lost, can no more be restored than the health of the natural body.

Look at France. When was there ever a country to all outward appearance more flourishing and prosperous, than the kingdom of France on the 1st of June, 1830? The King, Charles X., who was then sovereign there as the people are now sovereign in this country, thought that he could do any thing, and wisely turned out a very competent set of Ministers, in order to introduce another under his natural son, Prince Polignac. Polignac, conceiving in his turn that in so prosperous a condition of affairs he could do any thing without danger, amused himself and his royal master by repealing the liberty of the press, and the right of suffrage. What followed? Less than three years have since elapsed. Charles X. and his family are scattered to the four winds—Polignac and his associates are locked up in dungeons. In all these cases, the worthless tools by whom the mischief has been done are the first victims; and if the matter stopped here there would be no great cause for regret. But this is not all. France—Europe, are plunged into almost hopeless confusion. The streets of Paris have been repeatedly the theatre of carnage, and are now, with several of the Departments, under martial law. The peaceful pursuits of industry are all suspended. War has broken out in various quarters; and every sign portends the occurrence of another of those general convulsions which destroy in a great measure the peace and happiness of the civilized world, for at least one generation.

Are the people of the United States exempt from the operation of the causes which determine the fortunes of men and nations in other parts of the world? No. If we permit our most important affairs to be managed for any length of time by corrupt

and incompetent persons, we shall certainly suffer for it. This is the law of nature; and nothing but a miraculous intervention of Providence, which is never vouchsafed to the indolent and careless, can save us from its operation. If we madly entrust the command of our grand and admirable political STEAM-BOAT, with all its complicated machinery, to a set of ignorant, passionate, reckless officers, whose chief recommendation is a talent for railing and swearing, we may possibly make one or two trips without accident, but at no distant time the EXPLOSION MUST COME. The wretches whose presumption and folly will have occasioned it, if it do happen, will be first blown to atoms; but with them will also perish the splendid bark, the troops of passengers, and the high hopes of political improvement throughout the world, that have so long been connected with the fortunes of the star-spangled banner of Western Liberty.

Far from being powerless, the President of the United States is the most effective and important, as he is the highest in dignity of our political functionaries. It is he who gives in the last resort, the impulse to almost every movement of the political machine. The mischiefs which have already resulted from the mal-administration of the present incumbent in that office, are but too apparent; and he must be a bold man, who, after a careful and dispassionate survey of our present political condition, will undertake to say with any assurance, that the constitution of the country would hold out four years longer under the same management. For ourselves, though not habitually of a desponding disposition, though generally rather apt to indulge in favorable views of the future, we are compelled to express our decided conviction, that the re-election of Jackson for another term, would be fatal to the Union.

The crisis we are approaching, is, therefore, deeply interesting. It brings with it high responsibilities, and solemn duties.—It becomes us to reflect maturely beforehand upon the course we shall take, and not lightly, or from any merely party or personal prejudice, cast a vote, which may have so material an influence on the public welfare.

The partisans of Gen. Jackson have proposed him as a candidate for re-election. That he should have given his consent to this—that he should even have almost publicly solicited a nomination after all his previous protestations of a contrary character, is one among a great number of gross inconsistencies, which prove but too plainly his want of any fixed principles of conduct. Since, however, he has consented to come before the public a second time, and is seriously held up by a large, if not respectable, party, it becomes necessary to examine his preten-

sions, and to survey the course of his administration, which, for the honor of the country, it would be much more agreeable to consign at once to oblivion. We propose, accordingly, in several following papers, to consider successively,

1. The qualifications of Gen. Jackson for the Chief Magistracy of the Union.

2. The means by which he rose to that high dignity at the last election—and

3. The manner in which he has discharged his duties as President, during the current term.

It will appear, from the result of our inquiries, that he is utterly disqualified for the place, and that it is the bounden duty of every patriotic citizen to lay aside all minor considerations, and join heart and hand in the great and generous effort which is now making in all quarters to defeat his re-election.

## CHAPTER II.

### CHARACTER OF JACKSON.—MEANS BY WHICH HE WAS ELECTED.

WE propose, in the present chapter, to consider the qualifications of General Jackson for the Presidency of the United States, and the means by which he was elevated to that office at the last election.

General Jackson—before his nomination as a candidate for the Presidency—was known to the public as a daring, reckless and successful military commander. In his campaigns against the British and the Indians, he had repeatedly set at defiance the letter and spirit of the Constitution, the received maxims of public law, and the common feelings of humanity. The people had been rather disposed, in consideration of the substantial benefits which had accrued to the country from his military operations, to attribute these excesses to impulse and ignorance, rather than to a deliberate design to do wrong; but, taken in connexion with the known violence and rudeness of his private life, they served distinctly to characterize the man. In civil and political affairs, he had shown—though often placed in conspicuous positions—an absolute nullity. We allude to his private qualities no farther, than to say, that he was entirely destitute of the ordinary accomplishments of a well-bred gentleman, and incapable of writing a common English letter with tolerable correctness.



That such a person was wholly unfit for the office of President of the United States, is a proposition too plain to admit of argument. But this is not enough. We may safely go much farther, and say with perfect truth, that of all the citizens in any way known to the public, General Jackson was the only one, whose election might fairly be regarded as *dangerous*, and whom it was particularly expedient not to place in the President's chair. There was undoubtedly a choice among the prominent men of the country, some of whom would probably have transacted the business more acceptably than others; but no other candidate could have been mentioned, of whom it would not have been said at once that his election—whether expedient or not—was at least not *dangerous*. Of General Jackson this could not be said. The elevation to power of a bold, able, and unprincipled “Military Chieftain” has been uniformly fatal to the constitution of every free State in which it has occurred. If we have not already found our Cromwell, we owe it to the winter on General Jackson's head, and not to his moderation or our own prudence. At the preceding election by the House of Representatives, Mr. Clay, with his usual clear and strong sense, had perfectly apprehended the nature of the case, and stated it distinctly in his letter to Judge Brooke. He did not choose to commit the guardianship of our civil institutions to a daring and reckless soldier. For this exercise—we will not say of patriotism or sagacity—but of ordinary common sense, he was branded by the partisans of Jackson with corruption. It was apparent at the time to every one, not absolutely blinded by party prejudice, that any other course than the one he took would indeed have argued corruption, and that of the grossest character.

General Jackson was therefore not only destitute of all the qualifications and accomplishments necessary for the place, but was, by particular circumstances, positively disqualified for it;—was in fact, as we have said, the only man in the country whose elevation would be actually dangerous, and whom it was therefore particularly expedient not to place in the Presidency. By what fatality then did it happen, that this most enlightened and thinking people should have fixed precisely upon him as the most proper person for the office? The fact must undoubtedly be attributed in part to the sort of caprice which sometimes prevails in popular, as well as in arbitrary governments. King Demus, like other sovereigns, has his moments of wantonness, in which he plays tricks as fantastic and as mischievous as any of theirs. The result in question was however mainly owing to the intrigues of artful men, who found it convenient to employ

General Jackson's military reputation as a machine for advancing their own selfish projects.

The General was first presented to the public as a candidate, by the local feeling of his own State. With this we find no fault, and are rather disposed to regret that there is not more of a similar spirit in some other quarters, where it would probably be applied with more judgment and better effect. The adhesion of Pennsylvania was the first event, that gave any importance to the nomination which, till then, had been looked upon as a sort of bad joke. By what influence Pennsylvania, previously pledged to Mr. Calhoun, was induced to take this somerset, is, we believe, even now not very distinctly known. It was certainly not done at the instance of Mr. Calhoun, who was as much surprised as all the rest of the world, when he first learned the fact through the newspapers. Whatever may have led to it, it was certainly the first thing which gave to Jackson the least importance as a candidate.—For this timely declaration in his favor, and for her subsequent steady adhesion to his cause, the General is now showing his gratitude to Pennsylvania by striking a death-blow at her most valuable institutions, and her favorite schemes of policy.

The nomination having thus acquired a title to attention, was encouraged in some of the Southern States, more with a view of effecting a diversion of votes from other candidates than from a real wish for the General's success. In this way, however, he was brought into the House of Representatives as the candidate having the highest number of votes. To pretend that the House were for this reason bound to elect him President, is of course absurd. If the Constitution intended that the candidate having the highest number of votes should of course be President, why did not the Constitution say, that a plurality, and not a majority of votes, should decide the election? It is really wonderful, that a statesman so distinguished as Mr. Calhoun should publicly commit himself to an opinion so clearly and palpably untenable. The House were obviously at full liberty to select from the three candidates the one whom they preferred.—Mr. Crawford was disqualified by the state of his health, and the choice really lay between Mr. Adams and General Jackson:—that is, between the *only man* in the country, whom it was on every account particularly expedient not to make President, and one of those citizens, who were on every account best qualified,—were his private manners a little more gracious, perhaps we might say with justice, *the one*, who of all the citizens, was best qualified,—for this great office. It did not require all the lofty genius, far-sighted sagacity, and wide expanse of views, that belong to Mr.

Clay, to decide such a question. Any man of common sense and common integrity would have settled it in ten minutes, as he did. The people were fully satisfied with the decision. The administration of Mr. Adams more than justified the expectations of his warmest friends; and if the voice of inveterate local prejudice and personal ambition could have been stifled, and the real public opinion of the country been allowed to declare itself, he would have been re-elected President, four years after, without a dissenting vote.

This, however, was not to be expected. Poor human nature is the same at all times and in all countries, and on this occasion we saw an exhibition of some of her least attractive features. Before the new administration had commenced operations, it was openly declared, by the fanatical partisans of the Military Chieftain, that they should be put down were they as pure as the angels in heaven. Perceiving that a desperate struggle would be made for Jackson by this blind and reckless faction, the political leaders who aimed to succeed Mr. Adams in the presidency thought it safer to attach their fortunes to Jackson, whom they supposed to possess a great personal popularity, than to Mr. Adams, who as an Eastern man, and his father's son, was likely to encounter the strong and deeply-rooted prejudices of a large section of the country.—Under this persuasion, Mr. Van Buren, who had previously acted as the chief manager of the Crawford party, and Mr. Calhoun, then strong at the South in his high station and the great talents of himself and his partisans, if not in a wide reach of territorial influence, sunk for a time their conflicting personal pretensions, and formed a *combination* to defeat the re-election of Mr. Adams, and to bring in General Jackson as his successor.

When we compare the respective pretensions of these two persons, and recollect that their characters were perfectly well known to the men most active in forming this combination, we are compelled to say that we doubt whether the history of the world furnishes an example of a more unprincipled and corrupt intrigue. It is painful—it is mortifying—it degrades our view of human nature, to think that such men as Mr. Van Buren, and especially Mr. Calhoun, whom we look upon as personally in every respect a much superior man to the other,—should have engaged in it. Both will find to their cost that a plain, manly, upright policy would have served their purpose much better. Had Mr. Calhoun pursued such a course from the first, we have reason to believe that he would have been appointed secretary of state by Mr. Adams. In that case he would have followed Mr. Clay in the Presidency.—His prospects are now completely

desperate, and he has nothing to depend upon for his future consequence but the "sad cure," such as it is, of Nullification. The loss of such a man is a public misfortune. Van Buren—but of this man, his character and his prospects, we shall speak hereafter.

The combination thus formed effected its object by means not less corrupt and unprincipled, than the views in which it had its origin. The wisest measures were met in the halls of Congress by a bitterness and virulence of opposition which contrasts singularly enough with the easy acquiescence in the same quarter in the open violations of the Constitution and laws by the present Executive. But the great organ was the Press; and the means employed through the Press to undermine the administration were chiefly of two kinds—FALSE PRETENCES and PERSONAL SLANDER.

1. FALSE PRETENCES.—The adherents of Jackson assumed for themselves the exclusive title of the Republican Party, and denounced the administration as Federalists and aristocrats. By continually harping upon this string, they probably did more to shake the confidence of the people than in any other way. They knew perfectly well that the assertion was false. The Federalists had ceased, since the war, to act as a party. The five gentlemen who had appeared as candidates at the preceding election, Messrs. Adams, Jackson, Crawford, Clay and Calhoun, were all connected with the Republican party, and had enjoyed its confidence for years. There was no Federal party nor Federal candidate in the country. The assertion was therefore grossly false: in the mouths of those who made it was not merely false but BASE and MEAN. When the Republican administration were struggling with almost insuperable difficulties, Mr. Adams had given them the weight of his name, talents, and influence. He had done more than any individual in the country to help them honorably out of the war. In taking this course, he had incurred a good deal of ill-will with former political friends whom he had been obliged to oppose. To those who retained the feelings and prejudices of the old Federal party there was not a man in the country so obnoxious as Mr. Adams. Such was the person whom Republican editors, after receiving the benefit of his cooperation and services in the most difficult times, did not scruple to denounce as an opponent. It would be vain to expect any great generosity of feeling from the common herd of partisan politicians; but ingratitude for benefits received is after all one of the basest and blackest traits that can disgrace the human character. *Ingratum si dixeris, omnia dicis.*

False, base, and mean as it was, the pretence did more, as we

have said, than any other single cause to shake the confidence of the people. When urged by the leading Republican papers, as it was in some of the states, particularly in New Hampshire and Maine, it had an appearance of plausibility, and produced effect. The other great instrument employed by the party, hardly less effectual and certainly not more honorable than the one that we have mentioned, was

2. PERSONAL SLANDER.—Slander is undoubtedly one of the crying sins of this nation. Next to intemperance in the use of liquor, it may be looked upon as our chief national vice. The toleration of it to the extent to which it is carried, is the darkest shade in the present state of civilization among us, although it is one that has escaped the attention of the wiseacres, male and female, who annually come from Europe to spy out the nakedness of our land. It will be absolutely necessary, before long, that well-meaning citizens should form a general combination throughout the country for the suppression of this odious vice—like that which has been formed with so much success for the suppression of intemperance; if we mean to escape the severe judgments that Providence inflicts upon us, as a punishment for it, in the elevation of corrupt and wicked rulers. The extent to which it was carried by the Jackson party during the administration of Mr. Adams, is almost incredible. From the General himself, who did not scruple to join in the charge of corruption against his competitor—the man whom he had emphatically described as a friend in need—the man to whom he had been indebted, at the most critical periods of his career, for more than life—from General Jackson himself, down to the meanest village editor that barked in his train, the universal staple of attack was *personal slander*. To draw out the falsehoods that were then circulated from the oblivion to which they have long been consigned, would on every account be worse than useless. One, however, deserves to be remembered for its uncommon atrocity, and stamped as a perpetual brand upon the forehead of its guilty and infamous author. The President of the United States, a man remarkable for the purity of his life and conversation, and his lady, a matron of spotless character, the father and mother of a virtuous family, were publicly charged in print by a vile pamphleteer, with having made their home, while abroad, a scene of prostitution. Did the party disavow this disgusting calumny? Did they expel the unmanly author of it from their ranks, fix a note of infamy upon him, and set him adrift, to wander about like Cain, a marked man upon the face of the earth? Far from it. After the outrage had been fully exposed on the floor of the House of Representatives, Gen-

eral Jackson nominated the foul calumniator to a lucrative and honorable post in the executive department of the Government. When the Senate of the United States, to their everlasting honor, rejected, by an almost unanimous vote, the disgraceful nomination, the party at home took up the slanderer, and made him, as if in mockery, a member of the body that had just set upon him the seal of deserved reprobation. There he still remains—a monument of the utter political degradation of the state of New Hampshire.

Such were the means by which the election of Gen. Jackson was brought about, and such were his qualifications for the Chief Magistracy of the Union. The course of his administration corresponded entirely with the expectations which, under such circumstances, would naturally have been formed of it, as will amply appear in the following chapters.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### FORMATION OF THE CABINET.

WE have seen, in the preceding chapter, that General Jackson was, and is, utterly disqualified by his personal character and previous military career for the office of President:—that his election was the result of the intrigues of political leaders, who employed his popularity as a machine for the advancement of their own selfish projects; and that the means by which it was effected were chiefly FALSE PRETENCES and PERSONAL SLANDER. We propose to treat in the present article, of the manner in which he constituted his Cabinet.

The General's total incapacity to discharge the duties appertaining to the Presidency was hardly denied even by his own partisans; but in order to evade the objection, they asserted that he would compose an *able Cabinet*:—that he would select for the heads of the several departments, men in whom the nation might place confidence, and that these would do perfectly well the business which, it was admitted, the General could not do himself. This plan was quite an innovation, and certainly no improvement upon preceding modes of administering the Government; but when it was found that Jackson was actually elected, the friends of the country thought there was some reason to hope and expect, that the promise thus held out of an *able Cabinet* would be realised. The ability of the Cabinet would have

furnished no adequate compensation for the incapacity of the Chief Magistrate, upon whom the responsibility for the Executive Department rests; but it was at least desirable that there should be capacity somewhere, and if it were wanting in the head, it was imperiously necessary that it should be found in the members.

Never were hopes and expectations more completely disappointed. It seemed as if the new President, in constituting his Cabinet, and in making all his other appointments, had adopted the principle which the People had acted on in electing him; that of taking the least competent man whom they could find. The individuals among his own friends, in whose character and talents the people felt any confidence, were studiously passed over, and the offices were given, either to persons who were too insignificant to have attracted any attention, or who were known merely as violent political partisans. Such was the case at Washington—in this city—and, as far as we are informed, throughout the country.

The Jackson party consisted at that time of three principal sections or elements:—the General's personal adherents, the political friends of Mr. Calhoun, and those of Mr. Van Buren. Each of these sections comprehended gentlemen of merited distinction, who had been drawn, by some strange fatality, into the support of Jackson, but whose names would have given respectability to the new Cabinet, and commanded, to a certain extent, the public confidence. Such were among the General's personal adherents, Messrs. Livingston, White and Grundy: among the friends of Mr. Calhoun, Messrs. Hayne, McDuffie, and Hamilton: among those of Mr. Van Buren, Mr. Tazewell, Gov. Dickinson, Mr. McLane, and Mr. Forsyth. All these were men of known ability, and enjoyed, though in very different degrees, a certain share of the public esteem. The Calhoun men were the most eminent of the whole, and until they had destroyed their reputation for judgment and patriotism by the miserable farce of nullification, composed as brilliant a cluster of statesmen as could be found in any one of the states. It was understood, that Mr. Van Buren was to be Secretary of State. The purists, who had felt so much horror at the corrupt bargain between Messrs. Adams and Clay, hardly denied that such was the previous *arrangement*. But it was confidently expected that the friends of Mr. Calhoun and of the General himself would be represented in the Cabinet by some of the distinguished gentlemen enumerated above. What was the astonishment and dismay of all good men, when it was announced before the inauguration, that the Cabinet was to consist, beside Mr. Van Buren, of Messrs. Ingham, Branch, and Eaton, and that Postmaster-General McLean, a Jackson

man, was to give way to Mr. Barry! The only drop of comfort in the new arrangement was the appointment of Mr. Berrien, who, though infected with all sorts of political heresies, is an able, and personally, respectable man.—But Mr. Berrien was only Attorney General, and was not a member of the Cabinet; which was composed of Messrs. Van Buren, Ingham, Branch, Eaton, and Barry. Such was the construction of the *able Cabinet*, which was to make up, by its acknowledged capacity, for the acknowledged want of capacity in the head of the government, and which the Richmond Enquirer, who is fond of a joke, does not hesitate to describe as the ablest that had existed in the country since the first of General Washington.

In representing Messrs. Ingham and Branch as not at that time possessing the public confidence, we mean no particular disparagement to their characters. They were almost wholly unknown to the people. They afterwards exhibited—especially Mr. Ingham—more ability than the public had expected from them, and their conduct on the change of administration, somewhat raised them in the general estimation. Major Eaton is, we believe, personally not an obnoxious man. He is represented as essentially a weak, simple-hearted, good-humored creature, not without some notions of honor and courtesy, and, like Mr. Van Buren, ambitious of no other glory than that of having merited the esteem and confidence of Gen. Jackson. But that any one should have dreamed of him as a constituent member of an *able Cabinet*;—a Cabinet which was to make good the deficiencies of the chief, and equal or surpass the fame of the first Washington administration,—this is indeed rather singular. Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton—whatever the Richmond Enquirer may think of it—knew how to write and spell, and had a very good notion of English grammar.

When it was first announced at Washington that the Cabinet would be constituted in this manner, a friend of Mr. Adams, meeting by accident a prominent Calhoun man, expressed his wonder that the party should have acquiesced in such an arrangement. *Sir*, replied the other, *I wish to inform you that we know as little of what is doing at the Wigwam as you do.* Gen. Jackson was then lodged at the Indian Queen tavern. The public have since been informed by Gov. Hamilton, that the General about this time told him, that he should have given him the place of Secretary of War, had not his course in regard to the Tariff and Nullification rendered him unpopular throughout the country. A superficial glance at the state of parties as they then existed is sufficient, with the aid of the developments that have since taken place, to make it apparent under what influence the *able Cabinet*



was organised : why, and on what pretences, the prominent Calhoun men were studiously excluded from it ; and why it was composed of Martin Van Buren and four other gentlemen, who, if they knew little of reading, writing and English grammar, were supposed to be accomplished in the art of *cyphering* ; a supposition which experience has not so fully confirmed, as the leading *unit* probably expected.

The only object of the arrangement, in all its parts, was to promote the selfish views of Martin Van Buren :—whose mean soul could see nothing in the election of General Jackson but the victory of one party over another—nothing in the great affairs of the Government but the SPOILS to be distributed among the conquerors ; and whose first exploit was to jockey his confederates out of their share of these same spoils, and appropriate it to himself. Mr. Van Buren is, more than any other individual, responsible to the world and to posterity for the deep disgrace that has been attached to the national character by the elevation of General Jackson to the office of President ; and is almost exclusively responsible for the, if possible, still deeper degradation that has resulted from the acts of his administration. It is a fine example of what is sometimes called *poetical justice*, that is, the early occurrence of the disastrous consequences, which, sooner or later, generally attend on tortuous conduct, that this individual, after apparently realising all the objects he was aiming at, should have found them perishing, is it were, in his grasp :—have been compelled, bitterly against his will, though ostensibly by his own voluntary act, to quit the head of the department of State ; have been rejected by the Senate as a foreign Minister—under the circumstances, the strongest political censure that has ever been inflicted upon any citizen in this country :—and finally, have been held up, as if in mockery, for the Vice Presidency, only to be spurned at with one accord by the People. We said, in a former chapter, that we should speak particularly of this person, his character and his prospects. The present seems to be the proper opportunity.

Possessed of considerable talents, but without the advantage of education, Mr. Van Buren rose from the lowest walks of life to a place in the Senate of the United States. Had he shewn in this dignified station something of the generosity of feeling that so naturally belongs to it, the public would have given him credit for his success, without looking too narrowly into the means by which he had obtained it. But no sooner had he reached the Senate than we found him endeavoring to carry into the general politics of the country the disingenuous arts which he had practised so long on the smaller theatre of New

York. The election of 1824 was approaching. The Federal party had disappeared, and several candidates were presented to the people, all belonging to the Republican party, recommended respectively by different sections of the country and by various descriptions of public service. Unwilling to permit the public voice to declare itself freely for the most worthy, Mr. Van Buren attempted to revive the old party machinery in favor of the one whom he thought proper to support, and having procured his nomination by fifty or sixty members of Congress, declared, through the papers under his influence, that the persons who nominated him were *THE democratic members of Congress!*—Mr. Crawford, *THE democratic candidate*, and his friends *THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY*. Why Mr. Crawford—an original Federalist, and of all the candidates the one who had the least personal pretensions, was fixed upon as *THE Republican candidate*—is not apparent. Probably he was the only one whom Mr. Van Buren could at that time approach for the purpose of personal arrangement.

In this way, and for this purpose, commenced the system of *False Pretences*, which, as we have mentioned in a preceding chapter, has since been employed in favor of Jackson. What a miserable spirit a man must have, to denounce falsely as enemies his own political friends—men with whom he had been acting for years, and from whom he had received the most important services—merely to promote his own selfish views! Such was the conduct of Martin Van Buren in regard to Mr. Adams, and even Gen. Jackson, who though since and now declared by him to be *the democratic candidate*, was at that time falsely denounced as a Federalist.

This attempt to play off the New York machinery upon the great Theatre of the Union, did not succeed. Mr. Van Buren will ultimately find to his cost, that the people of the United States are not to be moved like puppets, by the mere drawing of a set of party wires. Even when they go wrong, it will generally be found that they act under some strong and generous impulse, like that, for example, which was made upon their minds by the military services of General Jackson. Defeated in the effort to elevate Mr. Crawford, and incapable of pursuing the manly and straight-forward course of supporting the administration of Mr. Adams until he should have done something to deserve opposition, Mr. Van Buren began to calculate in what way he could best promote his own projects of further advancement; and conceiving that it would be his safest course to connect himself with the supposed popularity of Jackson, joined in the *combination* we have already described.

Does any one suppose that Mr. Van Buren really believed the claims of Gen. Jackson superior to those of Mr. Adams? To bring the two men for a moment into comparison would be worse than mockery. On this head there was no mistake. Mr. Van Buren perfectly well knew that Gen. Jackson was not only utterly incompetent to the place, but that his elevation would be in a high degree dangerous—that it would certainly disgrace and might very possibly ruin the country. But of what consequence was it that the country was certainly disgraced and possibly ruined, provided that Martin Van Buren could take a step forward in political life? New York—the Empire State—which had just elected him to the highest office in her gift, and was unhappily at that time much under his influence, was thrown into the scale of Jackson. This time the plot succeeded, and Van Buren, to reward him for the share which he had in it, was placed in the Department of State.

Throughout these proceedings we see distinctly the character of the man:—a narrow, sordid, selfish spirit, pursuing little ends by little means: no loftiness of purpose: no power, depth or reach of mind: no generosity of feeling: no principle: of course, no faith in the existence of any such qualities in others. He enters on the high and sacred concerns of Government in the same temper, in which as a village lawyer he sat down to play *All Fours* at the ale-house, and is just as ready to employ any trick that will increase his share of the SPOILS OF VICTORY. This celebrated phrase—the most unblushing avowal of infamy that was ever made by a public man—characterizes completely Mr. Van Buren and his party. Such a man can never be popular in this or any other country. The people may at times be deceived by false representations of facts and superficial traits of character; but they detest meanness, and will never permanently attach their confidence to any man, who has not about him some great and generous qualities.

So much for Mr. Van Buren. Mr. Calhoun is a person of another stamp. Much as we regret the aberration of judgment and feeling, (to himself a fatal one,) which led him to support Gen. Jackson;—much as we deplore his connexion with the mad project of nullification,—we are yet bound to acknowledge—and we do it with pleasure—his vast superiority, intellectual, moral and political, over his Kinderhook competitor. Mr. Calhoun is a man of commanding talents, upright purpose, and a generous disposition. Few gentlemen have ever made a more brilliant *debut* in the House of Representatives, or displayed more efficiency and dignity in an executive department. His fault is excessive ambition, or rather a feverish impatience to

grasp the fruit which at the proper season would naturally drop into his hands: This has led him into great errors, but it is the defect of a noble and manly character. At the time when Gen. Jackson came into office, Mr. Calhoun enjoyed a very general popularity, excepting perhaps in New England, where he was once much respected, but where his treatment of Mr. Adams had given offence. Had Jackson administered the Government with moderate discretion, he would probably have been re-elected, and in that case Mr. Calhoun would have followed in the Presidency.

Van Buren of course could not venture to encounter such a man on the broad and open theatre of public favor. In order to supplant him, he resorted to his usual system of intrigue. In composing the Administration, he took care to exclude the great Calhoun leaders, under the pretence that their opinions on Nullification had rendered them unpopular. With the same general purpose and that he might keep the game entirely in his own hands, he excluded the prominent men among the President's personal friends, and gave them, as a representative in the Cabinet, *Major Eaton!!!*

Such is the history of the constitution of the *able Cabinet*. The blow which was thus aimed at the influence of Mr. Calhoun, was followed up by others which have since most signally recoiled upon their author, and to which we shall advert hereafter.—We shall proceed, in our next chapter, to examine the course of the Administration, beginning with the *policy of Proscription*.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### PROSCRIPTION.

THE election of General Jackson was a most perilous experiment, which the people, in a moment of wantonness, had tried upon the strength of their political constitution. There was however, a bare chance that the crisis might turn out somewhat less serious than the friends of the country generally feared. A considerable portion of the public, including Mr. Adams and his immediate personal friends, had considered Gen. Jackson as a rude, unlettered, and violent, but, on the whole, well-meaning man. In a letter addressed several years before to President Monroe, he had exhibited a very correct notion of the general

principles upon which the Government ought to be administered; and, in particular, had deprecated the indulgence of partisan preferences in appointments. If, conscious of his own incapacity to carry on the Government, and aware, as he had shown himself to be, of the true principles to be observed in the selection of public agents, he had acted on these with but a moderate degree of consistency and good faith, his election would have been attended with little or no public inconvenience. This was hoped by good men, and it did not appear entirely Utopian to suppose, that a President would show some little regard to rules of conduct, publicly laid down by himself, in the most emphatic and unequivocal terms.

The greater probability undoubtedly was, that his complete and avowed incapacity for civil affairs would throw him under the influence of the political intriguers who were employing his name and popularity to advance their own projects; and that these, with the aid of the President's official responsibility between them and the public, might be even less scrupulous in their proceedings than they would have been had they been acting in their own name.

Such has, in fact, been the case. We have seen, in the preceding chapter, that the Cabinet was constituted in such a manner, as to place the entire direction of the public affairs in the hands of Mr. Van Buren. The new Grand Vizier signaled the opening of his administration by introducing—for the first time, we believe, in the history of civilized nations—the principle of the UNIVERSAL PROSCRIPTION of the public agents, high and low, who were not attached to the party which had obtained the majority. Had Jackson himself exercised any influence in the Government, we incline to think that he would have shrunk from so barefaced an abandonment of his own avowed principles. Had Van Buren been acting in his own name, we doubt whether he would have ventured upon the responsibility of a measure so desperate. But conceiving, probably, that by acting under the General's mask, he should escape in part from this responsibility, and enjoy the advantage of a distribution of the SPGILS among his followers with less risk, he took the plunge—which is likely, in its consequences, to occasion the political ruin of himself and his master. The lists were made up, and the victims brought to the sacrifice, with an indiscriminate ferocity that made no inquiries respecting age, character, connexions, or condition, and would have done honor to the satellites of Domitian or Nero.

The extent to which this system of *cold-blooded massacre*—for it deserves no other name—was carried, has been often

stated, but cannot be made too familiar, and should be constantly held up to the public view and the public detestation, until the ingredients of the poisoned chalice have been returned—as they will be within a few months—to the lips of those who administered them. The number of the victims is distinctly indicated by the appalling fact, that within one month after the inauguration of Jackson there were more removals from office than had taken place since the organization of the Government. No superiority of qualifications—no length of service—no excellence of character or interest of personal position constituted a ground for exception. At the moment when the gratitude of the Nation for the services of the Army of the Revolution had led Congress to the adoption of the extraordinary measure of a *pension law*, several of the veteran survivors of the struggle were rudely thrust by the Executive out of the offices in which the justice of his predecessors had placed them, and left on the confines of the grave, to struggle with actual poverty. Posterity, when they read the account of the passage of the Pension Law, and the encomiums upon the characters and services of the Revolutionary Patriots that fill the columns of our pamphlets and newspapers, will hardly believe that at the same period the President denounced as a public enemy the venerable survivor of the *Tea Party*, and distributed his SPOILS among his own retainers.

Nothing could arrest the progress of this mischief. Mr. McLean, then Postmaster-General, attempted to make a stand for his department; but was compelled, though a Jackson-man, to quit it himself: hundreds of Postmasters were sacrificed at a blow; and this vast system which was constructed for the diffusion of knowledge and just principles among the People, became at once, as it has been ever since, and is now, an engine of corruption. The manner in which the operation was conducted was, if possible, still more offensive than the thing itself. The seat of Government became the scene of a disgusting personal scramble among thousands and tens of thousands of applicants, who had come up from all quarters of the Union to get their share of the SPOILS, as the carrion crows assemble round a carcass. The President himself forgot all regard for his own dignity and the ordinary rules of civility in his intercourse with the public servants, who had committed the heinous crime of receiving an appointment from one of his predecessors. In some cases, he treated them with the grossest rudeness in his own house, and in others violated, without scruple, his own positive engagements that they should not be removed.

All this was bad enough. It even constituted, as Mr. Madison has correctly stated in the *Federalist*—a good ground for

impeachment. The President has the constitutional right to remove the persons who hold their offices at his pleasure, but in this, as in every other case, he is bound to exercise his constitutional power in such a manner as, to the best of his knowledge and belief, will be most conducive to the public good. If he act from corrupt motives, though within the pale of the Constitution, he is impeachable, and to remove or appoint a public agent merely on party grounds is just as criminal as to remove or appoint him for a consideration in money.

But even this, bad as it was, was not the worst. The party felt that it was necessary to put some color upon this hitherto unprecedented proceeding, and in order to justify themselves to the People, they resorted to the infamous expedient of SLANDER. Not content with depriving hundreds of the ablest and most meritorious public agents of their means of subsistence, the President attempted to blast their characters by throwing out against them, in his Inaugural Address, the vague and sweeping charge of corruption. What would have been thought, if the President had publicly declared that commissions in the Army and Navy had fallen into corrupt hands, and had followed up this declaration by the removal of two or three hundred of our ablest and most distinguished military and naval officers, without giving them the opportunity of a hearing, or even knowing the offences that were imputed to them? Is the reputation of those who serve the public in a civil capacity, less dear to them, less sacred in itself, than that of the officers of the Army and Navy? Are they to be publicly denounced by the President as *corrupt*, and punished accordingly, without a hearing, or even a specification of the charge? If such proceedings are to be ultimately sanctioned by the public approbation, it is plain that the public service must be abandoned by every citizen who values or respects his own character, and become what the party avowedly wish to make it—a prize for which the reckless and the profligate are to gamble, fight and bully.

Attempts were even made in some instances to fasten this vague charge of corruption upon individuals. *Mr. Nourse, a clerk in one of the departments at Washington, was not only rudely thrust out of his place at the age of more than eighty, and after a long life devoted to the public service, but actually had his furniture seized under a Treasury warrant of distress upon a false charge of peculation, at a time when, as appears by a subsequent decision of the competent tribunal, the United States owed him more than twelve thousand dollars!* This single act, could it be fairly made known to the mass of the people, ought to and would raise such a general burst of indignation as would at once

send back the unfeeling tyrant who dared to commit it to his Hermitage. The case of Fillebrown was exactly similar. In that of Bradley, the public accounts were altered in the Post Office, for the sake of fastening upon a removed officer the responsibility for acts done by his successor.

The ordinary forms of decorous language contain no epithets appropriate to such proceedings. To say that they were violent, unjust and cruel, and at the same time revoltingly mean and base, conveys but a very inadequate impression of the unutterable disgust with which they must be contemplated by every manly, patriotic and honorable mind. The party themselves became, after a while, ashamed of the charge of corruption; and in the manifesto which followed the Inaugural Address, under the title of the President's First Message to Congress, they quitted this ground and resorted to the stale sophistry of *Rotation in Office*. It was now intimated that the possession of office had a bad effect upon the character of the possessor; that the public lost more by this result than they gained by his experience; that it was therefore expedient that all the public functionaries should be changed as often as once in three or four years; and especially and above all, that the President should never hold his office more than one term. As to the functionary himself, it was said that he had no claim to employment, or right to complain if he were removed. He sought the public service with a view to his own interest only, and when the public had received all the benefit which he was able to bestow upon them, they had a perfect right to set him adrift—when they had squeezed the orange, they were quite at liberty to throw away the peel.

Such was the manner in which the President in his first message to Congress, justified the system of proscription. What a noble and generous creed to be openly promulgated, and made the basis of public action, by the Chief Magistrate of the great Republic of the Western world! On this system, Washington had no other motive for taking the command of the army of the revolution, but to cover his personal expenses; for, as is well known, he refused all pay. Adams, Jay, and Franklin, were amply remunerated by their country for the gift of freedom, independence, and national being, when they had drawn for their salaries as Ministers Plenipotentiary. Such was not the feeling of Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, when he put at risk half a million of dollars with a dash of his pen; and if such is in future to be the standard of political morality among us, it is to be feared that the last of the signers, old as he is, may yet live to see the sacred instrument which received that signature, torn up and



trampled under foot like a worthless piece of waste paper. We will not, however, so far insult the good sense and patriotic feelings of our countrymen, as to attempt to refute this shallow and odious sophistry. It carries distinctly on its face the certificate of its origin, and however false in a general application to the honorable and high spirited people of the United States, is probably a very true description of the case of Mr. Van Buren. It is well observed by Dr. Johnson, that a person who accuses all men of acting from corrupt motives, convicts at least one. As Mr. Van Buren tells us that the citizens regularly seek the public service with sordid and selfish views, he will not be surprised if we venture to conclude that his own are of that character; and as he had previously informed us that the proper method of rewarding such services, was by an unceremonious dismissal, whenever it suited our convenience, we rather wonder that he should have been so deeply wounded by his own rejection as Minister Plenipotentiary to Great Britain. Let us hope that he will have made up his mind to endure the negative of the people upon his pretensions to the Vice Presidency with more composure.

The degree of sincerity with which the President expressed these opinions, were pretty distinctly shown soon after, when a missive was despatched from his own cabinet under his own frank, soliciting a renomination from the Legislature of Pennsylvania.

There is the less reason to refute this poor pretence of argument, inasmuch as even this has since been dropped. After first justifying the proscriptive system on the ground that the public offices had fallen into corrupt or incompetent hands, and then pretending that a perpetual rotation in office was in theory, the true method of transacting the public business to the best advantage, the party finally threw off the mask, and openly avowed, in the person of Mr. Senator Marcy, that the real object of the removals was to distribute among their followers the **SPOILS OF VICTORY**. In making this precious confession, Mr. Marcy very properly spoke for the New York school. *Such is the principle upon which we act in New York.* The public were pretty well aware of this before, but it is not amiss to have it certified under the hand and seal of the Regency. It only remains for them to be as explicit in regard to the means they employ as they have been in regard to the ends they aim at, and to emblazon upon their flag that other favorite New York maxim,—**ALL'S FAIR IN POLITICS**. We shall then know what to depend upon, and if we are taken in by them, it will at least be with our eyes open.

The unblushing and brazen faced assurance with which these political gamblers glory in their shame is almost comic. But it is time to quit this odious subject. The appointments that were made to fill the vacancies created by the proscriptive policy, furnish another chapter still more humiliating, if possible, to the friends of the country, than that of the removals. It really seemed at one time as if the State Prison was to become one of the steps in the career of official promotion. When before, was it ever known in this or any other civilized country, that a Diplomatic Agent had occasion, before he proceeded on his mission, to explain the circumstances under which he was indicted for forgery?—Even this—we say it with horror—was not the worst case. For the honor of the country and of humanity, we gladly draw a veil over the details of this scene.

Happily, the excess of the evil wrought immediately its own cure, and compelled the Senate to adopt an entire independence in regard to approvals, which they might not otherwise have so readily come into, and which, to a considerable extent at least, stayed the plague. To this distinguished body, not inferior in the eloquence, elevated standing, and manly patriotism of its members, to the Roman Senate in its brightest days, the people of this country are under great obligations. They stood forth boldly, at one of the darkest periods we have yet known, to redeem the national honor, and to arrest the base spirit of servility to Executive dictation that appeared to be curdling the very heart's blood of the Republic. If the national flag has not been trampled under foot by the British ministry—if the territory of Maine is yet entire—if we are not represented in several foreign courts by men who have been or should be the tenants of our penitentiaries—we owe it to the noble resistance of the Senate. Much no doubt of evil they could not prevent : wounds have been inflicted upon the Constitution which it will require the efforts of them and their successors for many years to come to heal ; but they did great good by their immediate action, and their high example has done still more. Their manly independence has awakened a corresponding spirit throughout the country. The wretched delusion under which the people were at one time laboring, seems to be rapidly passing off, and there is reason to hope that all will yet be well.

In the next chapter, we shall proceed in the examination of the policy of Gen. Jackson, and inquire briefly into the manner in which he has managed our Foreign Relations.

## CHAPTER V.

## FOREIGN RELATIONS.

THE leading characteristics of the conduct of the present Administration have been violence and meanness:—a combination of qualities as unattractive as any that can perhaps well be imagined. Wherever the direct influence of Gen. Jackson is apparent, their proceedings have been rude, arbitrary, and often absolutely unconstitutional: where Mr. Van Buren may be supposed to give the direction, the policy pursued is usually cunning, trickish and mean. This is more particularly the case with the Foreign Relations, which form so important a part of the attributions of the Federal Government, and in which the operation of low and narrow motives, especially those of a party character, is in every way so ungraceful. This department of the administration of Gen. Jackson has been marked by two principal features: first, a mean assumption of the credit of negotiations undertaken, matured, and in several instances concluded by his predecessor; and secondly, a mean prostration of the honor of the country at the feet of the British Ministry, for the purpose of obtaining, at all sacrifices, the appearance of a successful arrangement of the question of the Colonial trade.

It was said of the celebrated Carnot, that he *organized victory* in the French armies. It may be said with equal truth of Mr. Adams, that he organized success in the diplomacy of the United States. As Chairman of the Commissioners at Ghent he was called on, of course, to take the lead in the negotiations for peace; and the ability with which he conducted them, not only contributed as much as any other cause to procure us an advantageous peace, but called forth from British statesmen of various parties, including such men as the Marquis Wellesley and Sir James Mackintosh, the confession in open Parliament of the 'astonishing superiority' of the argument on our side. Even Mr. Pickering, then a representative in Congress, forgot on this occasion his hereditary antipathy to Mr. Adams's father's son, and cheerfully joined in the general expression of approbation and gratitude.

The conclusion of this treaty formed an era in our history. The close of the long wars of the French Revolution with which it coincided in point of time, left the political world in a wholly unsettled condition. The United States for the first time felt their importance, and were called upon to stand forth as a really in-

dependent power in the brotherhood of nations. The relations belonging to this new position were to be created. The task was one of the highest delicacy, and the honor of taking the principal direction in the execution of it devolved upon Mr. Adams. Upon assuming the duties of Secretary of State under President Monroe, he commenced negotiations with all the principal powers of the old and new world. The immediate management of them was committed in general to citizens of distinguished talents and learning, and they were continued with unremitting assiduity and diligence during the whole period of the administration of Messrs. Monroe and Adams. It would of course carry us beyond the limits of the present essay to give even a concise sketch of the plans of foreign policy embraced in these negotiations. Suffice it to say that they will hereafter furnish a subject for one of the most interesting and honorable chapters in our national history. Our present object is rather to consider the degree of success which attended these operations.

It is well known that no results can be obtained in the way of diplomatic negotiation excepting by much perseverance and long delay. But such was the correctness of the principles upon which Mr. Adams had predicated his foreign policy, and such the ability with which they had been enforced, that the negotiations had taken, in almost all quarters, a satisfactory direction. Our relations with the new South American States had been established:—our claims on many of the European powers, for spoiliations committed during the war, had been urged by unanswerable arguments, the force of which these powers were beginning to feel:—our true position in regard to Russia,—the cardinal point in our foreign relations as a political power, was for the first time perceived and acted on:—new commercial arrangements were matured or concluded with more than one State of the first order, particularly Austria and Turkey. With Great Britain our negotiations had been brought to a crisis, which, though it wore for the moment an unfavorable aspect, must have terminated—had not the progress of the affair been interrupted by the blundering interference of Mr. Van Buren—in a mutually beneficial convention. In short, our negotiations abroad were in a good train in all quarters, and this without the use of corrupt means, or any compromise of the national dignity. The reputation and influence of the country in foreign courts were constantly increasing, and our representatives were every where the objects of particular esteem and favor.

Such was the state of things when Gen. Jackson came into power. What was to be done? A President who had had the least pretensions to discretion and patriotism, would have consid-

ered himself too happy to be able to proceed in the same course, upon the same principles, and as far as possible with the same agents:—would have shrunk instinctively from any movement that should disturb in the slightest degree the existing harmony. With the degraded beings who had now usurped the seats once occupied by Washingtons, Adamses, Hamiltons and Jeffersons, the first thought was to appropriate the poor pittance with which the country rewards or rather ruins its diplomatic agents, as a part of the SPOILS OF VICTORY. For the first time in the history of this or any other civilized country, a change of Administration was made the signal for a general recall of the foreign ministers. Our whole policy was put at risk:—our negotiations thrown into a state of suspense:—a great positive outlay incurred:—public agents of acknowledged ability and experience rudely thrust out of place:—and all for the honorable purpose of providing a few additional morsels for the ravenous maw of the “Monster Party.” Such was the blundering impatience with which Mr. Van Buren conducted this operation, that he did not even stop to ask the chief clerk in the Department of State what was the regular form of recalling a foreign minister. This at least is the most charitable construction which can be put upon the fact, that in the mode of doing it he violated all the ordinary rules of international courtesy. As to the persons recalled, they—to reward them for years of expatriation, labor and pecuniary sacrifice—were publicly insulted as *corrupt and incapable*. After extending this manly and decorous treatment to we know not how many honorable citizens, Mr. Van Buren, when negatived himself by the Senate, very coolly represents his case as one of *peculiar hardship!* This modest little gentleman probably supposes that he has a patent right to outrage the most eminent citizens in the country with impunity, and that they, instead of resenting or taking it amiss, ought to think themselves too happy to be trampled upon by so great a man.

Such was the *debut* of Gen. Jackson in the management of our foreign relations: a violent and sudden interruption of all the most important negotiations for the purpose of placing a troop of his favorites.—And *such* favorites!—But we will not touch again upon this odious topic. The beginning, it must be owned, was not auspicious. Still, however, the negotiations had been so judiciously planned and were in so good a train when Jackson took them in hand, that with all his blunders, and all his ignorance, he could not prevent them from coming to a successful issue.—Treaties were sent home soon after the opening of his term from Brazil, Austria, Turkey and Denmark, and more recently from France, and Mexico, providing in a satisfac-

tory manner for the settlement of various questions of long standing and great interest, or opening new commercial relations. Of these arrangements the whole credit is obviously due to the preceding Administration. They had been negotiated on the principles laid down by Mr. Adams, and under his instructions. If the abrupt change in the persons of the ministers did not injure their progress, it will at least not be pretended that it could promote it; nor will it be pretended, even by the partisans of Jackson, that the change was in any instance, so far as personal qualifications were concerned, for the better. The credit of these treaties, belonged, therefore, we repeat, entirely to the preceding Administration. A President of high and honorable sentiments in announcing their conclusion, would have taken great care to make this fact distinctly known. A man of real merit scorns to deck himself out with borrowed plumes. The circumstance that his predecessor was a political opponent, would have been an additional motive for doing him the fullest justice—especially if that political opponent had proved himself individually, and on the most important occasions, a *friend in need*. What was Gen. Jackson's conduct? From first to last, he has carefully omitted even to mention the name of his predecessor in connection with any of these arrangements. His partisans, improving upon his example, regularly make the conclusion of a treaty negotiated entirely under the instructions of Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay, the occasion for pouring out upon these illustrious statesmen a new volley of slander and ribaldry. Thus, when the documents relating to the negotiation with Turkey were published during the late session of Congress, a scurrilous newspaper printed in this city employed them as the text for a eulogy on Mr. Van Buren, and an attack on Mr. Clay. Every one who has given the subject the slightest attention, is aware that the only change made in the arrangements of the preceding Administration in regard to Turkey by the agents of the present one, was the introduction by the latter into the treaty, of a foolish and imprudent article, which would have prejudiced our relations with Russia, and which was unanimously rejected by the Senate.

It sickens the heart to see this utter want of all the manly and generous sentiments—this complete ascendancy of the meanest and basest propensities of our nature in persons placed by their official rank at the very head of society:—to make the matter still worse, in a cabinet directed by a military President. Generosity, courtesy, dignity of manner, an excess of chivalrous feeling, constitute the peculiar graces of the military character, and in practice compensate in some degree for the absence of

many accomplishments that are not very compatible with that line of life. Without them the soldier degenerates into the ruffian and bully. We were in fact told beforehand, by the present partisans of Jackson, that in the event of his election the spirit belonging to these respectable professions would prevail at Washington. The disgraceful scenes of the last winter, to which we shall advert hereafter, have confirmed too fully the ominous prophecy.

Such, however, is the first leading feature in this branch of the proceedings of the present Administration:—a mean assumption of the credit belonging to their predecessors for several treaties, negotiated and matured or concluded under their instructions. In one important particular, Gen. Jackson has, as we have already remarked, given in some degree a new direction to the foreign policy of the country. We allude, of course, to the late arrangement of the question of the trade with the British West Indian Colonies.

It is not our purpose, nor would the limits of the present essay allow us, to enter upon a detailed examination of the merits of this arrangement, considered in itself and independently of the circumstances under which it was concluded. It has been amply shown in the debates upon the floor of the Senate, and particularly in the able and lucid speech of Mr. Sprague, that the country, instead of gaining any thing by this treaty, actually stands upon worse ground than before.—The effect of it, as far as it operates, which has been as yet to a very limited extent, will be to throw the carrying trade with the islands into British hands. But were the case in this respect otherwise,—had the treaty given us every thing that we had ever asked or wished,—had it conveyed to us in fee simple the whole soil and jurisdiction of the British West Indies, the advantage would have been too dearly purchased at the price which we gave for what we in fact got. A Secretary of State denouncing, in the name of the President, the government of his own country under a preceding Administration as an opposite party:—inviting a foreign Sovereign to take cognizance of our domestic differences, to enter into them, to turn them to account for the benefit of the pitiful petitioner, and of course for his own! Never before was a spectacle so shameful as this exhibited on the theatre of American diplomacy. Never, we trust, after the signal rebuke which the managers received in this instance, will it be repeated. The British Government called in to assist a recreant Administration in sustaining itself against the indignant outcry of the country! Shades of Washington, Hancock and Adams—of Hamilton, Jefferson, Monroe and Pinckney! Was this then to be the

*finale* of the long series of remonstrances, declarations, non-intercourses, embargoes, and wars, that have made up our relations with England for the last sixty years, and given full employment to the heads, the hearts, the pens, the tongues, and the swords of our best and bravest? This the *denouement* of the supersensitive delicacy that shrunk from the slightest breath of British interference in our politics, foreign or domestic, as if it had been a blasting pestilence or a red-hot sirocco? Where was the good genius of our country when a miserable Dutch pettifogger took the star-spangled banner, all radiant as it was, with fifty years of honor and victory, and spread it out as a carpet for the feet of Lord Aberdeen? No, never, never before was there such an example of national degradation. Thanks to Providence, the public feeling of the country revolted against it by a sort of convulsive reaction, and instead of prostrating the Union at the feet of the British Minister, Mr. Van Buren has only succeeded in prostrating himself at the feet of the Senate and People of the United States.—This exploit finishes, we trust, his political career, and determines the character that he will leave behind him. **MARTIN VAN BUREN, THE SECRETARY OF STATE WHO DENOUNCED HIS PREDECESSOR AS A POLITICAL OPPONENT TO THE BRITISH MINISTRY.**

How contemptible too was the apology made for this contemptible proceeding by the partisans of the Administration in the Senate! Not a lip in justification; but it seems that this part of the instructions was dictated by the President himself, and Mr. Van Buren is of course not responsible for it. The *Globe* has in fact informed us in so many words that the general is **BORN TO COMMAND**, and Mr. Van Buren, we know, is ambitious of no higher distinction than the **GLORY OF OBEDIENCE** to such a commander. Poor creatures! Are they really in earnest, or are they sporting with the supposed infatuation of the people? Was Mr. Van Buren then a passive instrument in the hands of his master? Had he no mind, voice, will, heart, or hand of his own? When before was there a Secretary of State in the United States, who shrunk from the responsibility of a letter that bore his own signature? When before was there a Secretary of State in the United States, who would not have hurled his commission back in the face of a President who should have dared to ask him to sign the dishonor of his country? But it is of little importance to the people how these worthies divide between them the responsibility of this business. There is infamy enough about it to bankrupt the whole firm.

There are other points of a doubtful character in our recent negotiations with England. There is reason to suppose that



Mr. Van Buren undertook to tamper with the great and delicate questions of Impressment and Neutral Rights, and as it has never been said of him, as it was of Goldsmith, that he adorns whatever he touches, we may be sure that his interference with these matters bodes no good to the honor of the country. It has been vaguely rumored that some apparent concession on these points was to have been purchased by a base surrender of the territorial and personal rights of the State of Maine. This work of iniquity, if it were in fact contemplated, has been nipped in the bud by the noble interference of the Senate, and we shall probably never know with certainty whether it was or was not entered upon. The bare suspicion of having entertained the intention of making such a compromise, would be sufficient, if there were nothing else exceptional about him, to fix the measure of Mr. Van Buren's character.

So much for our relations with Great Britain, the only part of our foreign policy of which the present Administration can properly claim the credit. No patriotic and high-spirited American can read the account of them without the strongest feelings of contempt and indignation. They constitute the serious part of the business: but in all human affairs, we are continually passing from grave to gay, and after going through with the *Trag dy* it was perhaps not unnatural that we should be entertained with a *Farce*.—When Napoleon elevated the Grand Duke of Wirtemberg, a bloated, blundering butcher-like potentate of the old school, to the dignity of King, it was said that he had for ten or twelve years been doing all he could to keep the Germans in tears, and that he was resolved for once to make them laugh. This, or something like it was probably the intention of Jackson and Van Buren, when they appointed John Randolph our Minister to Russia.

Our relations with this great power were previously in the most satisfactory state, thanks to the ability and discretion with which they had been managed by the preceding Administration. The Russian Cabinet, which has been for many years intellectually as well as physically the most powerful in Europe, has exhibited its usual sagacity in its whole deportment towards the United States. They have seen that the force of circumstances establishes a relation of political alliance between the two countries, and have uniformly acted accordingly. In our negotiations for peace with Great Britain—in our subsequent negotiations under the treaty of Ghent—in those that have been carried on more recently with Turkey—in short, throughout the whole progress of our foreign affairs for the last twenty years, we have enjoyed

the benefit of the countenance and good offices of Russia. It has so happened, that we have hitherto had but little opportunity of making any substantial return for these demonstrations of national good will. The least that could be expected from us was that we should discharge with punctuality the ordinary duties of official respect and decorum. What then must have been the feelings of the Russian Government, when—after such a course of conduct on their part towards us, a minister known to be personally agreeable to the Emperor was abruptly recalled, as if for the purpose of repaying his friendship with studied insult? What, again, must have been the impression made upon the Russian Court, accustomed as they had been to the dignity and propriety of Mr. Middleton's deportment—when they saw the new Plenipotentiary taking the field in a hunting dress—going down upon his knees before the Emperor, and—after playing a few more fantastic tricks of the same description—departing before he had fairly entered upon his duties, and fixing his residence—of all the places in the world—at London? No construction could of course be put upon such conduct but the true one, viz. that the minister was half crazy. But must not the Russian Cabinet have thought the President entirely so, to recall such a man as Mr. Middleton for the purpose of committing the affairs of the Legation to such a successor?

Such has been the mode, in which our foreign relations have been managed by the present incumbents in the government. For his proceedings towards both England and Russia, we have no hesitation in saying, that the President richly deserves the honors of *impeachment*. In the next chapter we shall take up the subject of the Domestic Policy of the country, the history of which is about as creditable to the discretion and ability of our rulers, as that of the foreign.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### DOMESTIC POLICY.

*Violence and Meanness*,—such, as we remarked in the last chapter, have been the leading characteristics of the conduct of the Administration. We have seen them exemplified in their mode of managing our foreign relations: we shall see them still more fully displayed in our home politics, which will form the subject of this and the two or three following chapters.

An Administration, like an individual, must be supposed to have, and in fact always has, certain objects to which its attention is chiefly devoted. Thus the leading point of the policy of Rome for several centuries was the overthrow of the rival republic of Carthage. The great object of the British government while under the brilliant administration of the younger Pitt, was to check the progress of the spirit of political reform at home and abroad:—the present object of the same government is to aid and accelerate this progress. The object of Napoleon was to found a vast military despotism upon the ruins of all the free states of Europe:—that of the Russian government, from the time of Peter the Great to the present day, has been substantially the same. To come nearer home, the chief object of the government of the United States, from its organization till the treaty of Ghent, was the security of our commercial and political rights as a *neutral power*: that of all the following Administrations, until the present, was the development of our internal resources and the encouragement of domestic industry. Such are the great concerns that engage the attention of statesmen, and serve to show that, even in their errors and excesses, they have at least something of the elevation of spirit that belongs to their position.

The objects of the present Administration have been of a different character. It is admitted by their partisans that, in seeking to obtain possession of the government, they had nothing in view but the **SPOILS OF VICTORY**. The distribution of these spoils has of course been the great affair, and the leading principle of conduct has been to distribute them, as far as possible, in such a way as would best ensure their possession for another term, or, in other words, as would most effectually “bring the patronage of the government into conflict with the purity of elections.” We have already adverted particularly to this feature in the proceedings of the Administration, in our chapter on the *Policy of Proscription*.—But even this object, base as it is, was too elevated to be steadily pursued.—Thrown up by accident, as they have been, out of the lowest circles of society—wholly destitute of the intellectual qualities and accomplishments that are wanted in the vast sphere of action where they are placed, their policy is of course the narrowest self interest, and even this must constantly give way to the impulses of their personal propensities and habits. It is a literal fact that, in the midst of all the political agitations of the present critical period, the object which has engaged, more than any other, the attention of the government of the United States under the administration of General Jackson, has been that of

procuring a favorable reception for a female friend of the President in the fashionable circles of Washington.

It is easy to see, upon the slightest survey of the proceedings of the Administration, in regard to the great and paramount concerns which really constitute the *domestic policy of the country*, that the latter have been entirely sacrificed to these miserable party and personal interests.—The Tariff and Internal Improvements:—The Indians and the Missionaries, and the Bank, are the most important subjects connected with the internal situation of the country, that have come under consideration during the last three years. We shall advert briefly, in succession, to each, and shall be able to show without difficulty, that, in reference to all of them, the President has acted, from the blind and arbitrary impulse of his own will, or with a single view to secure and perpetuate the ascendancy of *the party*.

1. The Tariff:—Since the close of the war with Great Britain, the development of the internal resources of the country by the encouragement of domestic industry, and the opening of communications by land and water, between the different sections of the Union, have become, as we have already remarked, the principal objects of interest with the people. The course of legislative measures intended to effect these objects, which was entered upon as early as the first formation of the government, has been pursued with increased vigor and spirit. A difference of opinion has no doubt existed in regard to the expediency, and even the constitutionality of these measures, but they have been steadily sustained by great and regularly increasing majorities of the citizens, and after the favorable results of the violent attack made upon them in Congress last winter, may be viewed as the *settled policy* of the nation. In the new impulse which was given to the progress of this system soon after the close of the war, Mr. Calhoun and his immediate friends and political associates from Carolina *took the lead*: and it is a singular and signal example of political inconsistency, that these very statesmen should have become the leaders of a party which denounces the same system as not only inexpedient but unconstitutional, and a fit occasion for actual rebellion (such is the plain English of *nullification*) against the General Government. The Eastern States came rather slowly and reluctantly into the adoption of the system. They were apprehensive of its effect upon their navigation, and until recently opposed it in every stage of its progress. Experience has at length satisfied them of its expediency: they have invested their capital on the faith of its continuance, and are now among its warmest supporters. The Great West has been from the be-

ginning, the ardent, consistent, and undeviating advocate of the same principles, which, important as they are every where else, constitute in that quarter of the Union, the *sine qua non* of prosperity, and even political existence.

As a Western politician, General Jackson was of course virtually pledged to the 'Tariff'. He had given before his election, the most positive and satisfactory assurances of his devotion to the protecting policy, particularly in his letter to the Governor of Indiana. Pennsylvania, whose support first gave consequence to his nomination, was perhaps the one of all the states most deeply interested in, and most unequivocally pledged to the American System. There was, therefore, every reason to suppose that whatever other deficiencies there might be in the character of Jackson, the great interest of domestic industry would,—as long as he should be President,—be sure of a firm and steady support in the Executive department of the government.

What has been the fact?—No sooner had he effected his election, than his advisers began to *calculate the value* of the Tariff as a party measure. It was found that a considerable portion of the citizens who are opposed to the protecting policy, had favored his election, and would probably be disposed to continue him in office; and that on the other hand, a majority of the friends of the system were attached to his opponents, Messrs. Adams and Clay.

What was to be done? A high-minded and patriotic President would have pursued a straight forward course,—maintained his principles,—redeemed his pledges, and left his popularity and his re-election to take care of themselves. Gen. Jackson and Mr. Van Buren looked at the matter under a different point of view. It would not answer to alienate the South, where their strength lay, by a manly and consistent support of the protecting policy: it would not answer on the other hand, to alienate the portion of the friends of that system, including Pennsylvania and the West, which were friends to them, by openly attacking it. The only thing they could do was to attempt to steer a middle course which should, if possible, please both parties, or at least not decidedly offend either. The language of the messages on this subject has been uniformly vague and vacillating. When the battle came on last winter before Congress, and the Secretary of the Treasury was called on to propose a measure, he made many fair professions of regard for domestic industry, and reported a bill, which would have left the woollen manufacture—one of the most important of all—the one of all, to which protection at the present moment is

perhaps most necessary—entirely unprotected. The great influence of the Executive was exerted to get through a bill upon this basis, and it was only by intense exertion and the most decided superiority in argument, that the friends of the country were enabled to make head against the combination of open and disguised enemies, and secure to this great interest a bare—perhaps, after all, an inadequate protection. The reckless tools of party would have sacrificed a capital of a hundred and fifty millions of dollars, and the happiness of the persons connected with it, without hesitation or scruple, to their miserable objects of personal ambition.

2. The case is substantially the same with *Internal Improvements*—the other great feature in what has been appropriately termed the *American System*. Here too the President was pledged by his position in the country—by his professed opinions and by the known interest of his warmest original supporters, to the protecting policy; and here too we have seen, perhaps even more distinctly than in regard to the Tariff—the predominance of the same wretched, time-serving, vacillating spirit that sacrifices every higher consideration to party management and the hope of temporary popularity. In the message announcing the veto of the Maysville Road Bill, the President distinctly admitted the right of the General Government to make internal improvements of a national character, and at the same time negatived a road which would have formed a portion of the great thoroughfare between the sea-board and the interior—a national communication, one would think,—if any one in the country can ever deserve that epithet. The object seems to have been to propitiate the friends of Internal Improvement by the doctrines of the message, and its enemies by the measures announced in it. The same system was pursued at the last session of Congress, when bills, involving precisely the same principles, were alternately rejected and approved by the President. The action of the Government on this subject has in fact, been so palpably, we may almost say ludicrously incoherent, that it can hardly be accounted for, even upon the principle of party management, and must in many instances be attributed to the mere personal caprice of the despot. On the whole, however, the leaning of the Administration is adverse to the progress of internal improvement, and is apparently becoming more so from year to year. In fact, the President at the close of the late message accompanying the veto on the Bank, distinctly intimates, if his language is to be considered as conveying any definite meaning, that the whole doctrine of the

protecting policy, in both its great branches, is entirely false and ought to be abandoned.

It appears, therefore, that in regard to the great subjects of the Tariff and Internal Improvements, Gen. Jackson has forfeited the pledges under which he came into office. He was elected as a friend of the American System: he has thus far given it a cold, vacillating, uncertain support, and there is reason to believe, that if re-elected, he will come out its open enemy.

Under these circumstances we say to those citizens who are attached to the principles of the Protecting Policy, and whose interests are identified with its maintenance, who have hitherto supported General Jackson because they believed him to be friendly to their interests, and who have found themselves invariably disappointed by his proceedings,—Will you give your confidence again to a person who has once so grossly deceived you? Will you aid in re-electing a President who has forfeited all the pledges under which he was before elected? Should you do this, can you blame any one but yourselves if your establishments are broken up, your fortunes ruined, and yourselves turned adrift upon the world?

We would say, in particular, to the citizens of the great state of PENNSYLVANIA—You made Gen. Jackson what he is; you took him up when his nomination was considered as little better than a piece of solemn mockery, and placed him in the chair of the chief magistracy. He publicly promised, that if elected, he would serve but a single term. Scarcely was he warm in his seat, than he came to you, and begged a re-nomination. You generously gave it to him. How has he repaid all your partiality? You held in your hands his repeated pledges that he was a firm and steady friend to your great interests. How have they been redeemed? Was Mr. McLane's plan of a Tariff Bill a very natural way of noticing the unanimous resolution of your Legislature in favor of the protecting policy? or the Veto message that in favor of the Bank? Can you, as men of good sense—of prudence—of honorable pride—continue to support a President who returns your civility by laying the axe at the root of all your establishments, and who, if he be re-elected, and persevere, as he doubtless will, in the same course, will carry desolation and poverty through your state? We think not; and the noble efforts which you are now making in all quarters to shake off the yoke seem to show that you are of the same opinion.

We would say, in like manner, to the citizens of our neighboring state of NEW HAMPSHIRE—one of those

which are most deeply interested in the maintenance and success of the protecting system—How long will you permit yourselves to be misrepresented on the floor of Congress, and in your own Legislature—in the Presidential chair, as far as your influence extends in determining the incumbent—by men who are blind to your interest, or, rather, who sacrifice it without scruple to their own sordid policy? Without the flocks of sheep that cover your pastures, and the manufactures that give employment to your sons and daughters, what would become of your population? Would they not at once abandon you granite hills for the green savannahs of the West? These flocks and these manufactures have been brought, by the measures adopted last winter, to the very verge of destruction. A further diminution of the protection hitherto granted them would complete the work. Will you, by giving your suffrages to the men who are pledged to pursue in every future Congress the same pernicious course, consent to depopulate your country, and reduce your farmers to beggary? Make, once for all, the manly effort which alone is necessary to the recovery of your moral independence; and let it not be said that the policy of one of the most intelligent and best-informed states of the Union shall be forever controlled by a single scurrilous newspaper.

The same or similar remarks may be addressed, with equal propriety, to the great agricultural states of the Middle and Western parts of the country, from New York to Louisiana. They all supported Gen. Jackson as a firm friend of American industry: they have found him treacherous, and they owe it to themselves not to give him the opportunity of deceiving them a second time. To the Southern states, which are at present opposed to protection, there is little to be said on this part of the subject, although even these, if they took a more correct view of their own interest, would find it as deeply involved in the maintenance of the system as that of any portion of the country. To the domestic producer, what, after all, can be more important than a domestic market? Massachusetts, with her immediate neighbors at the south and west, is, happily, sound. Maine, we trust, is at this moment giving proofs of her regeneration.

Our object in these papers is rather to point out the errors in the conduct of the present Administration, than to exalt the merit of the candidates for the succession. It would be difficult, however, to quit the subject of our domestic policy, without paying a tribute of respect to the extraordinary deserts of Mr. Clay in regard to this subject. This great statesman, by his exertions in Congress last winter, refreshed his reputation, and proved



that the progress of years has only matured his judgment without at all impairing the vigor and brilliancy of his eloquence. His speeches on the Tariff and the Public Lands are quite equal—in the opinion of some, superior—to the happiest efforts of his earlier days. It was a dangerous experiment—with him, as well as with Mr. Adams—to return after so long an absence, and with so high a reputation to sustain, to the floor of Congress. Both stood the trial nobly, and have come out of it with augmented fame. When we see these distinguished men quitting their places at the head of the Executive department, and entering the legislative bodies of the Union only to take the lead, as if by general acknowledgement in these:—when we compare their arduous labors, their brilliant reports and speeches, their skilful management on this new theatre, with the daily exhibitions of vulgar violence and intellectual nothingness at the White House, we are struck with astonishment that an intelligent people could have fallen into so strange an aberration of judgment as to give to its worthless tenant even a momentary preference over such competitors. This wretched delusion seems now to be rapidly passing off. The reign of common sense is apparently about to be restored, and whenever that happens, the reign of Jackson will of course terminate.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE INDIANS AND THE MISSIONARIES.

THIS is the darkest chapter in our history. If it were possible to draw a veil over it, we would gladly do so, for the honor of our country and of humanity. But it is not. The work of iniquity is still in progress. The only hope of arresting it before it reaches its consummation, must be founded in the awakening sense of justice of the people. The strongest appeals have been made repeatedly to the executive and legislative departments of the Government, as they are now constituted, but without effect. The judiciary has nobly taken its stand in defence of the right; but, without the co-operation of the executive, its interposition will probably be ineffectual. It is only by a change in the character of the Administration, and of the majorities in congress, that we can expect to redress this great wrong, and prevent the

final extermination of a civilized and Christian community. If there were no other objection to our present rulers, this alone ought to be considered as decisive; and it is therefore of the highest importance that the facts in the case should be constantly kept before the public mind.

What, then, are these facts? The Cherokee Indians occupy a territory somewhat smaller than the state of Massachusetts, and situated at the point where the boundaries of Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Alabama approach each other—partly in each of these states, but principally in Georgia. The possession of this territory has been solemnly guaranteed to them in a succession of treaties, first by Georgia herself, and subsequently by the Government of the United States, those of the latter class being not less than sixteen in number. In all these treaties, they are expressly recognized as a distinct community; their rights of property and jurisdiction are formally admitted; and it is stipulated that no citizen of the United States shall enter their territory without a passport. In all these treaties there are mutual concessions: the Cherokees make grants and promises in exchange for the guaranties and the promises which they receive. All these grants and promises so made by them have been faithfully executed—we have had the full benefit of them;—it is not even pretended that there has been any breach of faith. The Supreme Court has declared that the treaties are valid and binding. Finally, the intercourse act of 1802 authorises and requires the President to employ, if necessary, the military force of the country for the purpose of securing to the Indians the rights and privileges to which, under these treaties, they are entitled.

Such are the rights of the Indians. Let us look now at the manner in which they have been treated by Georgia and the General Government. In a time of perfect tranquillity—without a pretext even for complaint against the Cherokees—the state of Georgia, by a public act of her legislature, *extends her jurisdiction over them and their territory*: in other words, declares that she is herself the rightful sovereign of a territory of which another community has had from time immemorial quiet possession, and which is guaranteed to that community in a series of treaties by Georgia herself and the Union of which Georgia forms a part. Truly, a modest pretension! But even this is not the worst. The object is to obtain, not merely the jurisdiction, but the property. Another act is passed authorizing the survey of all the lands not in the immediate occupation of the Indians, and their division into lots, for the purpose (Will posterity believe it?) of distributing them by lottery among t hein-

habitants of the state. In order to render the quantity of land not included in this distribution as small as possible, the Indians are subjected to personal disabilities, which must render their residence in their ancient abodes intolerable, and, if the system is continued, will compel them all to emigrate.

Assailed in this unexampled manner by a stronger neighbor, whose aggressions they are wholly unable to resist by open force, the Cherokees appeal to the General Government, and invoke the execution of the laws and treaties by which their rights are secured. They appeal at different times to the three great departments, the Executive, the Legislative and the Judiciary. The Supreme Court answers their appeal with its usual prompt and yet prudent energy. In the first case in which the question came up—that of Corn Tassel, a prisoner, indicted for murder, a mandate was issued immediately, requiring the State of Georgia to appear in Court and defend the constitutionality of her proceedings. No sooner was the fact known, than the Legislature of Georgia, which was then in session, passed a set of resolutions, denying entirely the right of the Supreme Court to interfere with the course of her criminal jurisdiction, and requiring the Governor to resist any such interference by force. In open contempt of the authority of the Court, and with a disregard for the common feelings of humanity that makes the blood run cold, the prisoner—his trial still pending in the ordinary course of law—was ordered to execution and actually executed, or, in plain English, murdered under the forms of justice. When the case came on at Washington, the State of Georgia made default: the Court, with the dignified moderation and correct sense of propriety which constantly marks their proceedings, took no notice of the contumacious conduct of that state which was not regularly before them, and decided the case on a point of form in her favor. The next year the affair came up a second time in the case of the Missionaries, and the Court, with a manly firmness, not less honorable to them than the steady impartiality which they had exhibited before, gave an unequivocal opinion against the constitutionality of the laws of Georgia. When that opinion was sent down for execution, the authorities of Georgia, in their usual spirit of insubordination, refused to carry it into effect, and actually retained and now hold in close confinement, *in the State Penitentiary* TWO MINISTERS OF RELIGION—one of them a citizen of Massachusetts—under a process which the highest judicial authority of the United States has declared to be unconstitutional.

Such has been the conduct of Georgia. In the mean time

what has the President done? The President is bound by the constitution and his oath of office, to see that the laws and treaties are faithfully executed, and as we have said, is authorised and required by the Intercourse Act, to employ if necessary, the military force of the country, for the purpose of securing to the Indians the personal, political and territorial rights guaranteed to them by the treaties. What then has the President done?—In what way has he interfered to check these violent and unconstitutional usurpations of power by Georgia, and to sustain the Judiciary department in the rightful course of its constitutional functions? What sort of countenance and aid has he given to the feeble and distressed remnant of a once powerful people, who have come to him, *in their utmost need*—to invoke not merely the friendship for the beloved Cherokees, of which they had received so many honied assurances, but the **PLIGHTED PUBLIC FAITH** of the Union? When thus called upon by the Cherokees, the President informed them, through his Secretary of War, that whether the proceedings of Georgia were or were not in accordance with the treaties, the United States could not and would not undertake to oppose them. When the Supreme Court declared these proceedings to be unconstitutional, the President's Secretary at War attempted to refute the decision in a long manifesto, published in the semi-official paper called the *Globe*.—When the State of Georgia, in carrying her unconstitutional laws into execution, invaded the territory of the Cherokees, the President, instead of employing the military force of the country in their defence, actually withdrew a corps of troops which was previously stationed there, and left them entirely at the mercy of their enemies. Instead of lending them his countenance and aid in the unequal struggle in which they are engaged, he is continually laboring, through his agents, official and unofficial, to persuade them that they are in the wrong, that they cannot maintain their ground, and that they would do much better to quit their improvements—abandon their cultivated territory, and emigrate to a distant wilderness, two or three thousand miles off—in one word, that they would do better to abjure civilization and christianity, and return to barbarism.—When the State of Georgia, after setting at nought the claims of common humanity, and the majesty of the laws and constitution of the country, went still farther, and laid violent hands upon the persons of **MINISTERS OF RELIGION**, for no other cause than their zeal and activity in their sacred calling—the President not only did not, as he was bound to do by law—protect them, but actually withdrew from one of them the character of a functionary of

the United States, which he had held before, for the express purpose of exposing him entirely naked and defenceless—to the full sweep of the blows that were aimed at him by the brutal agents of the tyranny of Georgia.

Such has been the conduct of the President. Even Congress—we blush for the honor of the country, and of humanity, when we say it—even Congress has thus far been so completely enveloped in the toils of party management, that it has been found impossible by the friends of the country, notwithstanding their unremitting, laborious, energetic and most praiseworthy efforts, to obtain even a resolution that it was expedient to maintain the Public Faith of the Union.

Such are the facts in the case of the Indians and Missionaries : Let us now very briefly consider the character of these proceedings under the various aspects, in which they naturally present themselves :—their **PERFIDY** :—their **VIOLENCE** :—their **MEANNESS** :—their **BRUTALITY** :—the alarming resistance to the constitutional authority of the Supreme Court :—the revolting and outrageous defiance of the moral and religious feelings of the community.

**I. PERFIDY.**—A whole series of solemn treaties negotiated and concluded, successively, during a period of fifty years, under all the Administrations that have held the power of the government since its organization, are openly violated, without the slightest pretext or apology. It is not pretended that we were surprised or forced into the conclusion of any of them. They were free, fair and equal compacts, or rather they were compacts in which the real advantage was entirely on our side. It is not pretended that they have not been observed in good faith by the Indians. The lands which they granted, have been occupied and settled—the stipulations in our favor have all been executed—we have had the benefit of them to the last fraction. It is not even seriously pretended that the treaties were informal, although if such were the fact, it would furnish no excuse for the violation of a bona fide engagement, of which we have had the benefit. But it is not, as we have said, seriously pretended that the treaties are even informal. An objection of this description was indeed put forward by Georgia, who meanly attempted to pick a flaw in the form of an instrument of which she has had the benefit, for the sake of escaping from the payment of the consideration ; but the Supreme Court has put the extinguisher at once upon this feeble and unmanly effort. There is not even the poor and stale plea of state necessity. It is not pretended that the observance of the treaties would be productive of any material inconvenience either to Georgia or the

United States. The immediate motive for violating them is, to procure for Georgia the opportunity of distributing the Cherokee land by lottery among her citizens. The proceeding is an act of open, avowed, unblushing, deliberate, premeditated NATIONAL PERFIDY.

Is this a light thing? Are the people of the United States prepared, by continuing their present agents in power, to give their sanction to and take upon themselves the responsibility for this monstrous abuse of authority? We answer for them boldly, emphatically and decidedly, NO; a thousand times over, NO. **THE PUBLIC FAITH MUST AND SHALL BE PRESERVED.** The unprincipled and reckless tools of party, who are endeavoring to fasten upon our national character the stamp of indelible dishonor, by the violation of these treaties, must and shall give way to men who have at least the common honesty to feel and acknowledge the obligation of a contract.

2. **VIOLENCE and MEANNESS.** Independently of the positive engagements which we are under to the Indians; were there no relation between them and us, but that which is created by the law of nature and the fact of neighborhood:—the proceedings towards them are such, that they can hardly be paralleled even in the history of barbarous nations. There no doubt is now and always has been a great deal of injustice and violence in the world. Wars have been carried on;—states have been invaded and conquered for the mere gratification of personal ambition. In turning over the blood-stained rolls of history, the friends of humanity must too frequently

———Learn with horrent brow to rate  
What millions died that Cæsar might be great.

But in almost all the instances on record, even of gross and substantially unprovoked aggression, there is at least some pretext put forward by the aggressor, which, if true, would in some degree excuse the outrage. Even in the celebrated case of the partition of Poland, which in form approaches perhaps more nearly to the present than any other; a case in which as in this, three prosperous and powerful states combined to parcel out among themselves, the territory of a weak and unoffending neighbor, there was at least a pretence of state necessity. The transaction was justified by the partitioning powers, on the ground of the inconvenience and danger which they suffered from the troubles which habitually disturbed the interior of Poland. The proclamations that were issued, are filled with loud complaints of injuries and insults received from that dan-

gerous government. They breathe an edifying tone of justice and humanity—Russia, Austria and Prussia, if you believe them, are three peaceable and well-disposed powers, who have combined to abate a common nuisance. All this we know, was false and hollow; but it showed at least some sense of shame in the parties to the outrage; some disposition to assume a virtue although they had it not:—to discharge that tribute of *hypocrisy* which vice habitually pays to virtue. But that a state, claiming to be civilized and christian, should, in a time of profound peace, without even a pretence of injury or provocation, appropriate to itself the sovereignty over a weaker neighboring community, destroy its political existence, subject its members to the most atrocious indignities, and distribute their territory by lottery among its own people!—This, we confess, appears to us to be an entirely new case. We have paid some attention to political and diplomatic history, but we have met with no other exactly like it.

When we say that Georgia puts forward no pretences in justification of her proceedings, we mean that she makes no allegations of injury or fraud on the other side, which, if well founded, would justify her course. The attempts at apology which she has in fact made are of such a kind as rather aggravate than extenuate the injustice of her conduct. She says, for example, that when she took possession of her territory, she found the aboriginal inhabitants barbarians, and became immediately their rightful sovereign, because a civilized community possesses a natural right of sovereignty over its barbarous neighbors. The right thus acquired she ceded away in a series of solemn treaties. She now claims the right of rescinding these treaties, and resuming the sovereignty which had been granted away by them. Why? Because the Indians are now civilized. Such—if our readers will believe us—is the actual, bona fide intent and meaning of the language of the judges of Georgia, assembled in convention to decide upon the case of Tassel. Are the authorities of Georgia in earnest, or are they sharpening the sting of oppression by a bitter and criminal mockery? We will not trust ourselves to comment seriously upon such reasoning. It would be impossible to keep within the limits of moderation which are fixed by the dignity of the parties to this great cause.

The attack of Georgia upon the Cherokees is therefore destitute even of a plausible pretence of justice. And let it be observed that her pretensions extend much farther than they could be carried by conquest in the ordinary forms of civilized warfare. The law of nations is not understood to permit a

conquering people to take advantage of its success for the purpose of appropriating the territory and reducing to subjection the persons of the conquered. These are the practices of barbarous communities :—they were the practices of the northern hordes that overran the Roman empire. The principles of public law, as established by the practice of civilized nations, only permit the conqueror to proceed until he has reduced his enemy to terms, and obtained satisfaction for the injury which he has suffered. If he go beyond this, he puts himself in the wrong. It appears, therefore, that Georgia, in a time of profound peace, and without even a pretence of provocation, has proceeded, in her aggressions upon the Cherokees infinitely beyond the point which would have been authorized by actual conquest, in a war waged for a sufficient cause.

And then the *meanness*—the paltry, dastardly, pitiful meanness of the whole transaction. A man of real power, and who has withal a single spark of the lofty and generous spirit which so naturally accompanies a consciousness of strength, scorns to use his advantages, either in his public or private concerns, for the purpose of crushing the weak and unoffending. He would feel himself dishonored forever by such conduct. So true is this sentiment to nature that we find it exhibiting itself even in children. An overgrown lubber, who should undertake to treat with harshness an unoffending school-fellow of smaller size, would be hooted out of every village in the country. But what do we see in this affair? Three or four prosperous and powerful states, numbering on an average not less than half a million souls each, backed by a Union of twenty-four sovereign states and thirteen million inhabitants, are pouncing with all their combined strength upon a little peaceful society, composed of some fifteen thousand persons, incapable, of course, of offering the least resistance, or of defending themselves in any way but by an appeal to the sixteen treaties in which these very aggressors have solemnly guaranteed their political existence and the integrity of their territory. Is there an honorable man in the country whose cheek is not on fire with shame when he feels that, as a citizen of the United States he is unconsciously a party to such a transaction? But even this is not the worst.

3. BRUTALITY.—Mean and pitiful as it is in all cases for an individual or a nation to abuse power for the purpose of injuring the feeble, there is in this affair a feature of a still more revolting character. These Cherokees are not merely a peaceful and unoffending little community, but they are a community of a very peculiar and interesting character. They are among the last remnants of the once powerful native race that in former



days occupied the whole country: they are the only tribe of this great family that has made any considerable advances in civilization. It has often been doubted whether it were possible to induce these natives to assume the habits that belong to European culture; and, until within a short time, the general opinion was decidedly in the negative. For two centuries in succession the government and people of the United States have been urging, entreating, preaching, praying, compelling them, as it were, to come within the pale, but all in vain. At length, a single tribe takes us at our word, and comes in. They adopt our religion, form of government, dress, manners and customs; learn our language, make an alphabet for their own; rise, in short, very nearly to a level with ourselves in all the arts and accomplishments of civilized life. A community which has risen in this way from civilization to barbarism, in the life-time of a single generation, is a great moral and political curiosity. Their history forms a very valuable addition to the experiments that have been made upon the fortunes of our race. Every enlightened man would, for this reason—independently of any other circumstance—watch their further progress with peculiar interest, and would anxiously desire that no unfortunate accident might interfere with it. How, then, do we treat them? How do we—a civilized and Christian community—conduct ourselves towards this tribe of barbarians, whom we have succeeded in converting into a civilized and Christian community like ourselves? Georgia says to them, Gentlemen, we have succeeded in converting you from a tribe of barbarians into a civilized and Christian community like ourselves, and to show you the satisfaction we feel at your success and our own, we proceed to appropriate your country, confiscate your property, subject your persons to atrocious indignities, and destroy your political existence. They appeal for redress to the government of the United States. The government tells them—What? That it cannot and will not protect them—that, whether Georgia be right or wrong, she must have her way, and that they had much better quit their country, emigrate to a distant wilderness on the borders of the Red River, and there resume their former modes of life. Strange, astonishing—incredible as it may appear, after we have labored two centuries to civilize these Indians, and have at last succeeded with a single tribe, the first salutation which we address to them is a recommendation—what do we say?—a peremptory injunction, issued in contempt of a whole series of treaties, to return to barbarism.

And all this for the noble purpose of distributing a few more acres of land by lottery among the inhabitants of a state where there is now hardly one white family to the square mile!

4. But the most important and alarming aspect under which we can look at these proceedings, is in their relation to the constitutional authority of the supreme court. We have now reached that fearful crisis in our history, when a few months will decide whether the constitution and with it the Union of the states is to stand or fall. It is useless to attempt to conceal from ourselves that, if Georgia carries her point against the supreme court in this great case, the authority of that tribunal, and with it the basis of all our institutions, is destroyed forever. The decision of this question will depend upon the result of the election of President. At the next term of the supreme court to be held at Washington next winter, a return will be made of the refusal of Georgia to execute the decree of last winter, and the supreme court will then, agreeably to the provisions of the statute, address a precept to the marshal of Georgia, requiring him to execute the decree himself, and release the missionaries from the penitentiary. Should we have in office at that time a President who has the intelligence to know, and the manly firmness to do, his duty, Georgia will not venture to resist: the missionaries will be liberated:—the Cherokees will be maintained in the rights secured to them by treaty, and the whole affair will pass off without further trouble. If the present incumbent should be re-elected, and Georgia should feel that she is sustained and encouraged by the very power whose duty it is to arrest her mad course, she will probably resist:—Jackson will refuse to employ the military force of the Union in aid of the court, as he has already refused to employ it in the execution of the intercourse act:—the decree will not be executed:—the reign of law will terminate:—that of terror and violence will commence; and with it will commence for us the long series of internal commotions, proscriptions, confiscations,—wars, foreign and domestic, with all their frightful accompaniments and consequences,—which make up the history of most other nations, and from which, in the goodness of Providence, we have thus far been almost wholly exempt.

How fearful to reflect that such immense national interests are staked upon the almost fortuitous results of a popular election, which is to take place within six weeks throughout the whole country!—Are the wise and good—the fathers of families, who wish to bequeath to their children the same blessings which they inherited themselves from a virtuous and patriotic ancestry, sufficiently alive to the emergency of the crisis? Are they straining every nerve with the intense anxiety that men ought to feel who know that every thing valuable is at hazard?

5. There is still one consideration connected with this sub-

ject, more solemn than any to which we have hitherto adverted. We have seen in this affair the authorities of Georgia and the President of the United States combining to violate the respect due to the sacred character of a minister of religion, with a grossness hardly to be paralleled even in the history of barbarous communities. We have seen the MISSIONARIES, after having been not merely authorized, but invited, encouraged and urged by the government to prosecute their labors of love and piety in these remote regions, suddenly torn from their homes—dragged IN CHAINS and at the imminent risk of their lives, through the wilderness, subjected to a mock trial, and then committed to the PENITENTIARY—and all this without their having been guilty of the slightest offence against the public peace or the laws and constitution of the country. We have seen this course of more than brutal violence continued after the highest judicial authority of the country had solemnly declared their innocence.

Is this again a trifling thing? Will the christian people of the United States give their sanction, by placing him again in office, to the conduct of a President who treats the ministers of the christian religion with open outrage—loads them with chains—drags them from their peaceful homes to prison—commits them in defiance of law like common criminals to the Penitentiary, and violently keeps them there against the decision of the highest law authority affirming their innocence? For throughout this whole business we are to recollect that the real difficulty lies not in the perversity of Georgia, who would not dare to act unless she felt herself supported at head-quarters, but in the contumacy of the President, who tacitly and openly bears her out in all her violence. Will the people then sanction these proceedings by continuing the President in office? Once more we answer for them NO—a thousand times over, NO.

On this topic it would be vain and idle to enlarge: *The ministers of the christian religion detained against law like common criminals in the Penitentiary!* All the eloquence of Demosthenes and Patrick Henry could add nothing to the effect of such a sentence. Gen. Jackson will feel it to his cost at the polls.

One of these ministers of religion, Dr. Butler, is a citizen of this Commonwealth. He owes allegiance to Massachusetts, and Massachusetts in turn is bound to protect him at home and abroad from illegal violence. He is now violently detained in prison by the authorities of Georgia, in defiance of a decree of the Supreme Court declaring his innocence. If this violence should be continued after the Court shall have ordered its own officers to execute the decree, and the civil process shall be

entirely at an end, will it not be time for Massachusetts too to begin to think of her *reserved rights*? If the Government of the United States cannot or will not protect our most respected citizens in the exercise of the highest and most solemn functions from the *Penitentiary*, will it not be time for us to begin to think of taking their protection into our own hands?

But we must here finish this too long chapter. We cannot conclude without expressing our admiration of the noble firmness which has been shown by the Cherokees, in refusing to accept the insidious proposals to emigrate, which have been made to them by the General Government. With the fragments of sixteen violated treaties scattered round them, is it not something like mockery for the government of the United States even to ask them to conclude a seventeenth? Can it, in good earnest, reasonably be supposed that they would be tempted by any terms, however apparently favorable? No;—let them perish—if it must be so—in defence of their rights—by their fire-sides—on the tombs of their fathers! Let them fall—if it must be so—as so many of the best and bravest of all nations and ages—as so many of our own forefathers, fell before them—fighting manfully the good fight of innocence against oppression! How can they ever find a nobler or a happier way of passing from the troubled scenes of this transitory world to the permanent glories of a better?—But we do not apprehend this result. The supreme court, with a manly firmness not inferior to their own, has already declared in their favor: the People are preparing to sustain the sentence at the polls:—the agents of Georgia, who have bullied and blustered at their ease while they knew that there was no danger, will make great haste to draw in their horns, when they find themselves encountered by the power of the United States in the hands of a President who knows and will do his duty. The Cherokees will be supported in their rightful pretensions. **THE PUBLIC FAITH MUST AND WILL BE PRESERVED.**

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE BANK.

THE reputation and fortune of the persons composing the administration of any government seem to be, for the time being, identified with the welfare of the nation; and, by whatever means they may have obtained power, one would suppose that

they would naturally exercise it, in their own interest, with a view to the public good. It is, therefore, almost as difficult to comprehend as it is to excuse the sort of demoniac frenzy with which our present rulers have been, ever since their introduction into office, laboring to destroy ALL the great principles of the national prosperity, and to subvert ALL the most important and useful institutions of government. In the preceding chapters, we have seen them carrying confusion and corruption into all the departments of the public service, by treating the offices, from the highest to the lowest, as the **SPOILS OF VICTORY**:—arresting the progress of **DOMESTIC INDUSTRY** and **INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT**:—prostrating the **HONOR** of the country at the feet of the British ministry:—openly violating the **PUBLIC FAITH** with the Indian tribes:—outraging **DECENCY** and **RELIGION** in their treatment of the missionaries:—shaking the authority of the **SUPREME COURT** to its very foundation by abetting the proceedings of Georgia; and by the abuse of the appointing and veto powers in a great measure neutralizing the constitutional action of both branches of **CONGRESS**. To complete the picture, we have now to see them aiming a blow at the **BANK OF THE UNITED STATES**, which, if not checked in time, as we confidently trust that it will be, by the returning good sense and patriotic feeling of the people, will throw the **CURRENCY** into disorder, and condemn a large proportion of the most industrious and honorable citizens among us to immediate **BANKRUPTCY**.

We shall not undertake to say which of the various impolitic, illegal and unconstitutional proceedings of the present Administration will prove, in the end, most injurious to the country; but the one which will be attended with the greatest amount of immediate and therefore certain and irremediable evil, is probably the *destruction of the Bank*. Fortunately this is also the one which more than any other has engaged the public attention. The merits of the question have been, for two years past, discussed in every form, and the importance of sustaining the Bank set forth with such clearness of illustration and irresistible force of argument in reviews and other journals, reports of committees and speeches of members of congress, that there is really no room or excuse for mistake. We may mention particularly, as one of the ablest arguments that have appeared upon this subject, the speech delivered by Mr. Webster in the senate upon the reception of the veto message, and which has lately been reported for the newspapers. After so many elaborate and copious discussions, it may almost appear superflu-

ous to treat this subject in the cursory form which belongs to these essays. But it ought not to be wholly omitted in a general review of the conduct of the Administration; and if our hasty suggestions should affect only one mind that has not yet been reached by the logic and eloquence of abler champions of the good cause, our efforts may not, in the present divided state of the people, be without a salutary and important influence.

The National Bank, though not properly a *political* institution, is one of the most important and valuable instruments that are used in the practical administration of the government. It serves three great purposes:—It is the financial agent of the Executive for all its receipts and payments: It aids in regulating the currency, as far as this is composed of paper, by acting as a check upon the local banks, and distributing through the Union a safe and uniform emission of notes: and thirdly: It performs, but in a much more effectual and extensive way than any similar institution, the usual functions of a Bank, in accommodating the public with loans of capital. For each and all of these purposes, the existence of the National Bank is, in a manner, indispensable; and, were it even possible to get along without it (as it certainly would not be), the sudden destruction of the existing Bank, under the present economical circumstances of the country, would be attended with an extent of individual suffering and loss of property unexampled perhaps in the history of civilized communities.

When the first bank was first proposed, soon after the adoption of the present constitution, the question was started whether the government possessed, under that instrument, the power to establish such an institution. The political parties of the day were divided upon this, as they were upon most other questions that came before the nation,—not so much perhaps because the matter was in itself very doubtful, as because parties that exist on other accounts seek, and of course find, in every new topic a new occasion for difference. The party which had been originally opposed to the Bank possessed the almost undisputed control of the legislative and executive departments of the government when the charter expired, and it was not at the time renewed. Experience, however, soon satisfied the most intelligent and powerful men among them that their theories on the subject were erroneous, and that a Bank was absolutely indispensable to the safe and prosperous conduct of the public affairs. Within a few years after the expiration of the charter of the former one, another was accordingly established, with a larger capital and more extended powers. Mr. Madison,

then President of the United States, and one of the most active opponents of the other Bank, gave to this his cordial approbation. In the mean time, the institution had received the sanction of the Supreme Court ; and the two great parties which had formerly divided the country, and which comprehended all the active citizens, being both in favor of it, it went into operation with the unanimous assent and concurrence of the whole people.

The results have been such as might have been expected from such auspices. The currency of the country, which, at the time when the Bank was established, was in a state of utter and apparently irremediable disorder, was rapidly restored to the sound and healthy condition, in which it has been ever since and is now. The agency of the Bank, if not the only cause that operated in the production of this most salutary change, was unquestionably one of the most important and effective. Having lent its aid in reforming the currency, the Bank entered on its regular course of official duty, which it has ever since pursued with exemplary success. As the fiscal agent of the Executive, it has exhibited a remarkable intelligence, efficiency, energy, and, above all, **INDEPENDENCE**. This—as we shall presently see—has been its real crime. As the regulator of the currency, it has furnished the country with a safe, convenient and copious circulating medium, and prevented the mischiefs that would otherwise result from the insecurity of the local banks. As a mere institution for loaning money, it has been, as it were, the Providence of the less wealthy sections of the Union. It has distributed with unsparing hand almost the whole of its vast capital throughout the western states, where capital, at any moderate rate of interest, would be otherwise nearly inaccessible. The extent of the benefit conferred in this way, not on the west only, but on the whole country, will never be fully appreciated except, should that unfortunately happen, by its loss. Through its dealings in exchange at home and abroad, the Bank has materially facilitated the operations of our foreign and domestic trade. The important advantages which have thus been derived from this institution have been unattended by any countervailing evil. As its term advanced, and its officers acquired additional experience, it has been constantly gaining on the public favor. There has been no suspicion of abuse; not a lisp of complaint has been heard on any account throughout the country; and since it has been thought necessary, for electioneering purposes, to raise a clamor against the institution, it is really curious, as well as melancholy, to see how low the party managers have been content to

stoop—to what wretched and pitiful shifts they have been driven, in order to find any thing that could be tortured, by any art or sophistry, into the appearance of mal-administration.

Such was the condition of the Bank, and such the state of the public opinion in regard to it when, in an evil hour, the reins of government were entrusted to the hands of our present rulers. The hostility of Jackson to the institution was not known, or known only to confidential friends, previously to his election, nor was it exhibited in the inaugural address: but in his first message to Congress, he came out with an open denunciation of the Bank as it is now constituted, and a recommendation of another, apparently of a totally different kind, the particular character of which, as it has not been explained, it would of course be useless to discuss. The motives which led to this extraordinary proceeding, are not distinctly known.—When we connect the time of its appearance with that of the transactions in relation to the branch at Portsmouth, where the independence of the officers of the Bank defeated the attempts of the executive to make it subservient to party purposes, it seems not improbable, especially considering the well-known character of Jackson, that we are to look to these transactions as the moving cause of his determination to destroy the institution. We have accordingly stated above that the INDEPENDENCE of the president and directors of the bank is their only real crime. It is probable, however, that the party managers also calculated that they should gain something for electioneering purposes, by endeavoring to revive the prejudices that were formerly entertained on this subject by the old republican party, and by making use of it as a pretext for appealing to the worst passions of the uninformed part of the people. This motive is as exactly in keeping with the character of Van Buren as the former one is with that of his master. The immediate interest of the local banks may also perhaps have been brought to bear in a slight degree on the question. Such taken together were probably the causes of this proceeding; and the extent to which each may have operated in producing the result, we must leave to the reader to decide. At all events, the ostensible motives assigned in the first message, in the reports of the committee of the House of Representatives, in the Veto message, and in the party newspapers, were obviously put forward merely *ad captandum*, as we shall presently have occasion to show.

The denunciation in the first message to Congress was unaccompanied by any reasons, excepting the naked and shameless assertion, that the Bank had not accomplished the purposes



for which it was instituted. In the second message to Congress, delivered a year after, the denunciation was renewed in the same laconic style, and it was repeated for the third time in the message that was sent to Congress at the opening of the last session. In the mean while, however, the members of the cabinet had been changed, and there was a pretty important new feature in the aspect of the Executive communications on this subject. On the day following the delivery of the message, a report was transmitted from the Secretary of the Treasury, containing a regular and elaborate argument in favor of re-chartering the Bank. This circumstance, taken in connexion with some passages in the message, of which the meaning might be considered doubtful, were supposed by some persons to indicate that Jackson had, under the influence of better counsels, revised his opinion and was preparing to retrace his steps. For ourselves, we were too well aware of his violence and wrong-headedness to entertain any such hopes. At all events, however, it was clearly the policy of the friends of the Bank that the subject should be brought up and carried through Congress at the last session; in order that if Jackson should dare to realize his threats, the people might have an opportunity of reversing his decision before it could be carried into effect. The proceedings of Congress are too recent to require to be here recapitulated. Though the report of the examining committee of the House of Representatives was formally against the Bank, the general result of their labors was decidedly favorable. The majority were triumphantly refuted by Mr. Mc Duffie in the name of the minority, and then in a separate report JONATHAN RUSSELLED by Mr. Adams. Van Buren's 'premonitory symptom' skulked off lame and whining from the field. Mr. Clayton has not yet found that 'convenient opportunity' for replying to Mr. Adams, which the opponents of the latter gentlemen are not unfrequently a long time waiting for. The bill for re-chartering the Bank passed triumphantly through both houses. The President returned it with the celebrated Veto Message.

This document—when Jackson shall have been, as we trust he will be within a very few months, remanded to the Hermitage:—when the people shall have long since recovered from the temporary delusion that placed him in office:—when most of the messages and other papers to which his name has been affixed, shall have been sunk by their leaden dullness in the gulf of oblivion:—this document—the Veto Message—will probably be kept in memory, and often appealed to as a curious example of the extent to which, at the commencement of the

nineteenth century, the elected chief magistrate of a free, civilized and enlightened people dared to insult the common sense and moral feeling of his constituents. The indignant outcry of the people has already passed judgment upon this unworthy paper and its author, so that it is nearly as superfluous as it would be, within the limits of the present essay, impossible to examine its contents in detail. We shall confine ourselves to a few remarks upon those parts in which the subject is treated under an economical point of view.

On this head, the doctrine of the President has at least the merit of novelty. He gravely informs Congress that it is an act of intolerable oppression, to furnish a man with capital to carry on his business, on the ordinary condition of paying interest for the use of it. Iago counsels Cassio in the play to put 'money in his pocket' as an almost infallible method of succeeding in all his enterprises. Gen. Jackson is evidently of opinion that to put money in a man's pocket, is to subject him to great and grievous embarrassment.—Now the Bank has, it seems, been guilty of the high crime and misdemeanor of placing sundry millions of foreign capital in the pockets of the people of the United States, and also sundry millions of capital belonging to the Atlantic cities, in the pockets of the West. This is not all. Will posterity believe that in this humane and enlightened age, the Bank, as the representative of the owners of this foreign and eastern capital, has the barbarity to demand of the western people, in whose pockets it is placed, the payment of six per cent. interest by the year for the use of it? The fact would undoubtedly be considered incredible, did it not rest upon the unquestionable authority of the President of the United States. 'The debt due to the bank by the West,' says the Veto Message, 'is principally a debt to the eastern and foreign stockholders; the *interest* they pay upon it (mark the villany!) is carried into the eastern states and to England, and is a burden upon their industry (poor souls!) and a drain of currency which no country can bear without inconvenience and occasional distress.' It seems then, from the President's showing, that these poor people of the West are not allowed, as honest men should be, to appropriate the earnings of others to their own use, without fee or reward, as the SPOILS OF VICTORY, but are actually subjected to the enormous imposition of paying upon all the money they borrow, the charge of six per cent. annual interest. This, to be sure, is 'flat burglary.' The Bank permits itself to be made the instrument of this work of iniquity and oppression, and is of course fairly obnoxious to the execration of all the friends of justice and humanity.

But how is the mischief to be remedied?—If the President is admirable in discovering the nature of the disease, he is no less admirable in applying the cure. These Western states, who are thus *oppressed* with a loan of thirty millions of dollars, and who are thus subjected to the intolerable hardship and burden of paying six per cent. interest upon it are to be *relieved*—how, gentle reader?—by being suddenly called upon to pay to these same eastern and foreign stockholders, instead of the intolerable six per cent. interest, the whole hundred per cent. capital within two or three years.

Is not this excellent?—Is not this creditable to the government and country?—Is not this a fine piece of work to go out to Europe as a specimen of the perfection to which the science of political economy has been carried by the ‘freest and most enlightened nation on the globe?’—It is an act of oppression to furnish a man with capital to carry on his business: the way to relieve him is to compel him to pay it back again at all sacrifices and at a moment’s notice. These are discoveries of which Alexander Hamilton and Albert Gallatin never dreamed. Smith, Say and Ricardo might have pored over their books for centuries, without ever stumbling upon them. The document which contains them, will doubtless be valued, when the *Wealth of Nations* and the *Report on Manufactures* are forgotten. Did it never occur to the worthies of the *Kitchen Cabinet*, in the course of their learned speculations on capital and credit, to ask themselves the questions: Who compels the western people to borrow this money, if they do not want it?—If they wish to relieve themselves from the burden of the interest by paying the principal, why cannot they do it as well without the destruction of the Bank as with it?

Seriously:—If this incredible nonsense were found in the first attempt of a college freshman, a reader of ordinary intelligence would shrug his shoulders, pronounce the writer an incorrigible blockhead, and pass the work over in silence as below criticism. When we see it presented by the Chief Magistrate of the country, in a public message to Congress, as a ground of action on the most important subjects, involving the interests of the whole people, and the private fortunes of thousands of the citizens, the case becomes alarming. What are we to think of the capacity and information of the President and his advisers?—If we suppose them sincere, what lamentable ignorance, we will not say of political science, but of the common business of practical life!—If, on the other hand, we suppose them to possess but a moderate share of the most ordinary information, what barefaced imposition! what profound contempt for the intelligence of the people!

The objections of the committee of the House of Representatives to the administration of the Bank, are about upon a level in importance and justice, with those of the Kitchen Cabinet to the renewal of the charter. One would suppose that the committee had been purposely laboring to make themselves ridiculous. The Bank is, it seems, very strongly suspected of *dealing in American coin*. Really, and is there not also room to suspect that it has made loans and issued notes? Here are more *violations of the charter*, which ought not to have escaped the vigilance of the committee. Again: the branches have made drafts upon the parent Bank, and, fearful to relate! these drafts have been struck from a copperplate engraving. Further still: The Bank has made *donations* to sundry lamplighters and newspaper carriers every new year's day, and various *internal improvements* on its real estate, by putting on new locks on doors and desks when the old ones were worn out, and mending windows when the glasses were broken:—the whole to the great terror and dismay of the good citizens, and in open *violation of the charter* and of the laws in such cases made and provided!

Such in sober earnest and with a very slight exaggeration, which does not affect the merits of the question, are the charges gravely preferred by a committee of the House of Representatives against the Bank, as motives for refusing the renewal of the charter, and cautiously submitted, *without any opinion upon their sufficiency*, to the judgment of the House. It is satisfactory to reflect that the representatives of the people, who permitted themselves to take so unworthy a course, not only failed in carrying with them the assent of the house, but received in public, at the hands of their chairman, the indignant, bitter and effective reproof which their conduct so justly merited. The common sense of the nation is now fully possessed of the subject, and has passed a sentence on the proceedings of Messrs. Clayton and Cambreleng, which can never be reversed.

The spirit that breathes through all these denunciations of the Bank is, if possible, still worse than the reasoning contained in them. For the first time, perhaps, in the history of civilized communities, the Chief Magistrate of a great nation—the natural and chosen guardian of order and the public peace—is found appealing to the worst passions of the uninformed part of the people, and endeavoring to stir up the poor against the rich. If the Bank should be re-chartered, “the humble members of society, the farmers, mechanics and laborers, who have neither the time nor the means of securing like favors to themselves, have a right,” says the veto message, “to complain of the injustice of the government.” The party journals are constantly

harping on the same string. The Bank is denounced as a *monied aristocracy*, subsisting in bloated arrogance upon the plunder of the poor. Are these foul-mouthed calumniators so profoundly ignorant of every fact connected with the subjects which they are every day writing upon, as not to know that it is the precise purpose of banks to furnish to the persons of moderate fortune whom the President is pleased to designate as "the humble members of society" the opportunity of associating together, and accommodating each other with mutual loans:—that these associations are, as we have already remarked, the *Providence* of the less wealthy portions of the Union and of the community:—that a large proportion of the stock of all the banks is held by the representatives of widows and orphans, who could not otherwise readily find so good an investment for their property:—that the rich can, without difficulty, accommodate themselves in other ways, and that it would be to them a matter of entire indifference if every bank in the country, national and local, were struck out of existence tomorrow? Are they ignorant, we ask, of these notorious and acknowledged truths?—No, they are not—but they think, or hope, that by boldly misrepresenting facts, and perpetually stimulating the vicious propensities of the mass of the people, they shall be able to obtain the number of votes necessary to continue them in office, and secure for another term the possession of the SPOILS OF VICTORY. Such is the object; and, in the Jackson code of morality, the end sanctifies the means: ALL'S FAIR IN POLITICS.

If there could possibly be any thing worse than the spirit and temper of these proceedings, it would be the detestable system of PERSONAL SLANDER by which they are supported. Because a senator of the United States stands up in his place to sustain one of the most valuable and important institutions of the country against an attack notoriously carried on as a mere electioneering manœuvre, he is charged at once by a hundred presses with BRIBERY. In a late number of the *Washington Globe*, we remarked an article headed *Political Morality*, and introduced by the following verses, which were placed at the head as an epigraph:

Oh for a whip in every honest hand,  
To lash the rascals naked through the land!

On looking farther, we found that these *rascals* who were to be lashed naked through the land by the pure and honest hands of Isaac Hill and Amos Kendall, were no other than Messrs. Clay, Webster, and their principal associates in congress, and that their offence is to have recommended in their places the re-

chartering of the Bank. The paper containing this article is, as our readers know, the semi-official organ of the government. So much for the right guaranteed to members of Congress of not being questioned in other places for words spoken in debate in either house. The President himself does not scruple to lend his personal countenance to this system, and has been convicted of publicly retailing, in his tavern conversations, during his late journey to the West, the revolting calumnies of the Globe.

Will this assassination of character be much longer tolerated by the public opinion of the people of the United States? Will it be much longer borne that all distinctions of right and wrong shall thus be habitually reversed, and the most abandoned and profligate members of society permitted to fasten publicly upon the foreheads of the best and purest, the brand of guilt? Lay what unction we will to our souls, the people are not innocent in this matter. We consider it as a proof of a low state of civilization in Spain, in Turkey, and in many other countries that the roads are not safe:—that the stern decree of public sentiment does not lend force to the law—sweep the cowardly miscreants that infest them from the face of the earth, and enable the traveller to pursue his journey in security. The reproach is just; but are not the moral assassins, that prowl through every portion of this vast Union, equally criminal, and far more cowardly than the cuthroats and cutpurses of the old world? Is it not equally the duty of the public to enforce the now wholly ineffectual laws against them, and to declare with a voice too clear and loud to be mistaken or disregarded, that **THIS THING SHALL NOT BE**? Is it not the bounden duty of the people to place this odious vice upon the same footing with other open offences against morals, which, if they cannot be wholly suppressed, are at least compelled to hide their heads? The toleration which public opinion now extends to slander is criminal. We suffer for it in the elevation of corrupt and wicked rulers, which is chiefly brought about by the use of this infamous engine. A reform like that which we suggest, **MUST TAKE PLACE**. If it do not—if the system is permitted to go on as it has done for some years past, from bad to worse, the country will become uninhabitable. Men of honor and probity will quit a region where they are not secured in the best and most valuable of their possessions, character, and seek in preference—if they can find no other refuge—the lion-haunted forests of India, or the cannibal shores of New Zealand.

In this lowest depth of degradation there is yet a lower deep. The proceedings in regard to the Bank indicate more distinctly

than any other single symptom the fearful and disgraceful fact of an irresponsible cabal behind the President's chair, overruling the opinion of his known and responsible advisers. Mr. McLane in his Treasury Report, strongly recommended, as we have remarked, the re-chartering of the Bank. The Kitchen Cabinet veto the bill : and the Secretary of the Treasury retains his commission ! Can the mere charm of holding an office so completely bewilder the understandings even of intelligent and upright men as to blind them to the plainest dictates of good sense and honorable feeling ? Look to the mother country. Was there ever a Chancellor of the Exchequer who would have kept his place under such circumstances ? Since the President preferred the policy of his secret cabinet in regard to the most important measures, why did not Mr. McLane resign at once, and permit the real Secretary to make his appearance ? We should then have seen whether the people would endure the infamy of being governed ostensibly, as they are substantially, by Amos Kendall and Isaac Hill.

Such have been the proceedings in regard to the Bank, and such the manner in which they have been defended. What would be the effect of its destruction ? It would unsettle the currency and carry desolation and bankruptcy through the whole Western country. The debt of thirty millions due from that section to the Bank **CANNOT BE PAID**. The attempt to enforce it would ruin thousands of our most industrious and valuable citizens, and arrest for years the prosperity of the whole West. Will the people consent to this for the mere purpose of securing to the military chieftain and his partizans the **SPOILS OF VICTORY** for another term ? **THEY WILL NOT**.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### EXPLOSION OF PARTIES.—KITCHEN CABINET.

In the preceding chapters, we have, agreeably to the plan proposed at the commencement of the work, rapidly reviewed the character and qualifications of Gen. Jackson and of the leading members of his first Administration:—the means by which they got possession of the government, and the manner in which they have administered it. We have seen that Jackson is himself entirely deficient in all the talents and accomplishments, required in the office of President of the Uni-

ted States :—that his personal habits and the events of his preceding career, rendered him perhaps the only prominent man in the country, whom it was decidedly dangerous to entrust with that office:—that he was elevated to it by a combination of political leaders, who used his name and popularity as machinery to advance their own selfish projects, and finally, that he has employed the influence it has given him to deprive the people of their most faithful and valuable servants;—to corrupt the sources of the national prosperity, and to undermine the most important institutions of government.

It only remains to comment briefly, in conclusion, upon the explosion of parties which took place about a year ago in the cabinet, on the spirit of the Administration as now constituted, and on the means that are in use to sustain the party in power.

We remarked in one of our first chapters that the original Jackson party consisted of three principal divisions, viz. the personal adherents of the General, and the political friends of Messrs. Calhoun and Van Buren. The General's own strength, as far as he had any, lay in his supposed popularity with the great body of voters, and this was the circumstance that induced the political leaders to attach themselves to his cause. The political influence of the party was almost wholly in the hands of the friends of Messrs. Calhoun and Van Buren. But these, although they had acted together for the immediate purpose of ejecting Mr. Adams and bringing in Jackson, not only had no community of opinion, feeling or interest, but were on all essential points at open war with each other. Their views on the great questions of internal policy which have almost exclusively occupied the public attention for three years past, were diametrically opposite, and the political pretensions of their leaders came directly into collision. Both aspired to succeed Gen. Jackson in the Presidency, and neither would adjourn his claims for a single day. It was obvious enough that these contradictory elements could not very long co-operate harmoniously in the same political party :—that an explosion must sooner or later take place, and that this could not be deferred beyond the time when the question of the succession should come before the people. It was presumed that great efforts would be made to preserve unity, until the re-election of Jackson should be secured ; and it was thought not improbable, that under a strong sense of common interest and common danger, this might be effected.

Passion, however, proved too strong for policy. In a little more than two years the explosion broke out with circumstances of so much violence and scandal, as not only to



destroy entirely the chance of General Jackson's re-election, and of the success of either of the rivals to the succession, but as to endanger very seriously the tranquillity and permanence of the Union. The constantly increasing zeal with which Mr. Calhoun has continued, from year to year, to urge the doctrine of nullification, must be attributed, in part at least, to his disappointment and disgust at finding himself turned aside by the arts of an every way inferior competitor, from the high career which he was once pursuing with so fair a prospect of success.—There are few stronger examples in history than this, of the irresistible force with which the spontaneous and original impulses of our nature overmaster all the combinations of art, and sweep down the slender barriers by which calculation endeavors to dam them up.

The breach among the SPOILERS had in fact become irreparable even before they had entered into possession of the PLUNDER. The Calhoun leaders—as we have already had occasion to remark—were not consulted about the arrangement of the Administration. Van Buren assigned to himself the lion's share of the spoils, and gave to the other divisions of the party such representatives in the cabinet as he thought best fitted to promote his own objects. We may well suppose that the fiery spirit of the Southern champion did not very patiently brook this indignity, but it was deemed expedient to suspend an open rupture as long as possible. In his position as President of the Senate, and in the great superiority of the talents of his partisans in Congress, Mr. Calhoun had some advantages over his rival, who on the other hand controlled the cabinet and the back stairs. It remained to be seen, which of these two sorts of influence would preponderate. The two first years of the Administration were chiefly occupied with the struggle of the two parties for the 'esteem and confidence of Gen. Jackson,' the possession of which the leaders of one of them has since publicly declared to be a title of honor sufficient to satisfy the most extravagant ambition.

The history of these two years, carried out fully into all its details, as it one day probably will be, would resemble a chapter in the *Scandalous Chronicle* of the Greek Empire, or the *Memoirs of the French Court* of the time of Louis XV., and treated by a powerful hand with perfect freedom, would be full of entertainment and instruction. Nemesis, it is said, is always on the watch. It was a singular and even laughable circumstance, that a party which had affected to charge Mr. Adams—a man remarkable for a more than republican simplicity of

manner—with a fondness for *etiquette*, should have been principally occupied for about two years in settling the question, whether a particular lady should or should not be received in the fashionable circles of Washington. To effect her introduction seems to have been, as we remarked before, during this period, the leading object of the policy of Jackson and Van Buren; to prevent it was, on the other hand, the not less constant effort of the adherents of Mr. Calhoun. This controversy was for the time being the point upon which all the great political affairs of the country were made to turn:—Negotiations with foreign ministers—correspondence and conversations among the members of the cabinet—discussions at the President's house—on all occasions, this was the universal topic. If we are rightly informed, the only cabinet meeting which was held while Van Buren was Secretary of State was occupied with the discussion of this great question. It is foreign to our purpose to enter into the arguments that were urged on both sides in the course of these debates. The sanctuary of private life is not to be invaded even for the purpose of supporting a good cause. We may remark in general that whatever outward form and coloring the controversy may have assumed, it was after all substantially *political*. The object of Mr. Van Buren was to sustain the reputation and influence of Major Eaton, whom he had placed in the cabinet as the representative of the personal friends of Jackson, and through whom he expected to exercise an indirect influence over the General himself. The object of Mr. Calhoun, was of course to counteract this influence, and if possible to remove Eaton from Washington.

In this controversy, Van Buren came off with flying colors. Although the fair exclusives of Washington obstinately refused to unfold their drawing-room doors at the utterance of the executive *Open sesame!* the President, with equal firmness, refused to close his in compliment to their scruples, and after a hard struggle, continued with unremitting vigor on both sides through the long session of '29—30, the **MALIGN INFLUENCE**, that is in substance, the influence of Van Buren, was found to retain undiminished its original ascendancy. It is evident, in fact, that while the warfare between the rivals was waged upon this ground, the advantage was wholly in favor of the Secretary of State. He was in possession of the field. He commanded the cabinet, the back-stairs, and the bed-chamber. His talents, as far as he possesses any, fit him to act upon this theatre. His little, narrow, sordid soul is at home in the little arts, the little intrigues, the little miserable, mischievous monkey tricks, that may be supposed to decide questions in a

council of chambermaids. The Vice President, on the other hand, moved in a sphere entirely aloof from this paltry manœuvring. His advantages lay in the superiority of his friends in the two Houses of Congress. His and their great talents, commanding eloquence, manly firmness and decision of character, were all lost in this obscure contest, where the only real disgrace was not to be defeated.

Finding, after a sufficiently long experiment, that there was no possibility of dislodging the **MALIGN INFLUENCE** in a quiet way from the councils of the palace, the Vice President, with the vigor and boldness that belong to his character, determined at once upon an open breach. Van Buren had secured to himself the entire **SPOILS** of the **VICTORY** which placed the combined party in power: he was pushing for the succession with the full approbation and favor of Jackson. If Mr. Calhoun, for the sake of preserving the unity of the party, were to acquiesce in this state of things until after Jackson should be re-elected for another term, the course of public opinion would be settled, and his own chance for the succession lost forever. There was therefore no other resource left to him but to take a stand at once, as he did. Thus Van Buren, by an excess of selfish and treacherous cunning—as often happens in this kind of management—overreached himself. Had he dealt more openly and fairly with Mr. Calhoun, allowed him his full share of influence in the administration, waived for the time his personal views, and confined himself to an active discharge of the duties of his department (for which, however, he was in all respects totally unqualified,) he would probably at this moment have been Secretary of State, with a fair prospect of the succession to the Presidency.

But on what ground was Mr. Calhoun to take his stand for the purpose of making a public attack on his rival? Here lay the weakness of his case, and the reason why—although he succeeded at once in demolishing his puny antagonist—he made no impression upon the people in his own favor. The controversy between him and Van Buren was, in substance, a quarrel between two political leaders, who considered the offices of government as the **SPOILS OF VICTORY**, about the division of them. This was obviously a case where the people of the United States could not reasonably be expected to take much interest in favor of either of the combatants. Whether the compact between the two leaders had been fairly observed on both sides;—whether the automaton whom they employed as the nominal distributor of spoils had done his work impartially between them, and if not, why?—were ques-

tions which the people hardly thought it worth their while to discuss. When they saw Mr. Calhoun publicly take a stand against his rival, the real ground for satisfaction was that this open breach must necessarily break up the whole machinery of the combined party, destroy all chance of the re-election of Jackson, as well as of the success of either of the pretenders, and afford the people an opportunity of placing in the principal offices of government men who do not consider them as prizes for which the reckless and profligate are to gamble, fight and bully, but as sacred trusts instituted for the public good, and which no individual can accept or hold from any other motive than regard for the public good, without assuming a responsibility sufficiently serious to alarm the conscience of all but the most hardened and abandoned reprobates.

The question, however, such as it was between the two rivals, was publicly discussed. Why did Gen. Jackson bestow his "esteem and confidence" upon Mr. Van Buren, rather than Mr. Calhoun? This interesting inquiry was made the subject of various pamphlets, of much correspondence, and of many interminable newspaper articles. Mr. Calhoun ascertained, as he thought, that Van Buren had poisoned the mind of the General by artful misrepresentations of the part which he had taken, as Secretary of War, in the Cabinet discussions upon Jackson's conduct towards the Spaniards and the Seminoles. He published a pamphlet containing what he considered the evidence of such misrepresentation. The fact was denied by Van Buren, who summoned to his aid as witnesses Messrs. Crawford, Forsyth, Hamilton and others. Mr. Calhoun, on the other hand, invoked the testimony of his immediate friends. The newspapers were occupied for months with long statements and counter-statements, and the battles of the Seminole war were again fought and refought a hundred times over. The most edifying part of the affair was to see these persons, who had all for six years preceding been crying themselves hoarse in charging Mr. Adams with a corrupt bargain, now with one accord appealing to him as a man in whose integrity and uprightness they could place implicit confidence for testimony in support of their respective statements. Mr. Adams, with the calm and modest dignity that belongs to his character, supplied, without reflection or commentary, the facts that were wanted. But the people, as we have said, took little or no interest in the discussion, although it was abundantly seasoned throughout with the hot spice of scandal. They only saw that their enemies had come to daggers-drawing among themselves, and, without taking much trouble to ascertain what it was all about,

or which side was most in the wrong, began immediately to make preparations for obtaining their own rights, which honest men, who have been dispossessed of them, commonly avail themselves of such occasions to recover.

Van Buren, on his side, with the magnanimity and patriotism which distinguish all his proceedings, began to look after his own interest. Aware of his utter inability to face the Vice President in an open discussion of any question before the people, and also knowing that an open struggle between them would be fatal to the unity of the party, he endeavored to prevent it by a timely retreat from the field. He accordingly resigned his place as Secretary of State, and Mr. McLane having been recalled, accepted the post of Minister to England, which, as he has since told us, (we have no doubt truly,) he intended to occupy for the 'usual period' of four years. His calculation seems to have been to remain abroad over the now pending election. If in consequence of his retreat the unity of the party should be preserved, and Jackson re-elected, he would assume the credit of a magnanimous sacrifice of his own interest to the good of the party, and use it as an argument in support of his pretensions to the succession. If, on the other hand—as was more probable—the party should break up completely, and Jackson's re-election be defeated, he would still find himself in one of the most conspicuous places in the executive department of the government, from which he could watch the movement of parties at home, and at a proper season make up his mind which was likely to prove 'the Republican party,' or in other words, the strongest side. In retiring himself from the field, it was important, however, that he should not leave it in possession of the enemy; and, as two at least of his colleagues in the Cabinet were devoted to Mr. Calhoun, it was necessary to get rid of them, and fill their places with persons on whom he could depend.

Some men would probably have found the operation rather embarrassing; but this modest little gentleman possesses, as we have already remarked, a patent right to outrage the most eminent men in the country with impunity: and the privilege extends not only to political opponents, but to men of all parties, including his own, whenever they are supposed to stand in the way of his immediate selfish interest. With the same delicate sense of justice and decorum which had marked his deportment towards the public functionaries belonging to the preceding Administration, he now turned upon his political friends, and, without the slightest pretext or apology, rudely thrust out of the highest and most responsible posts of the government the very

men whom, two years before, he had selected from the whole people as the persons most competent to fill them, with about the same ceremony as a common citizen would practise in changing his shoe-black. The form given to this proceeding was that of an entire change of the heads of departments. A correspondence took place between the retiring or ejected functionaries and their chief, including several letters of mutual explanation among themselves. The reason assigned by Van Buren for tendering his resignation was that he must either retire or disfranchise himself,—that is, surrender his claims to the Presidency of the United States. In choosing the former part of the alternative, he virtually proposes himself to the people as a candidate for the succession. The people will of course take him at his word. It would be unpardonable to lose the opportunity of having ‘the sweetest little fellow in the world,’ and who is evidently as modest and ‘innocent as sweet,’ at the head of the government.

But why did the other heads of departments quit their places? Messrs. Ingham, Eaton, Branch and Berrien were not candidates for the Presidency. They might have continued without *disfranchising themselves* to hold the offices which they filled, in the diplomatic phrase, ‘with so much credit to themselves and advantage to the country.’ Why were they compelled to retire? The President supplies the reason in one of his letters. His ‘Cabinet proper’ had been and must continue to be a *mit*—which, done into English, seems to mean that, as the heads of departments came into office together, they must all go out at the same time. To this there could, of course, be no reply. The consequence, to be sure, is not clear, but **MUST** is a bold word, which carries every thing before it, and no doubt suited admirably well the southern stomachs of the gentlemen to whom it was addressed. Eaton, who was in the secret, came very readily into the arrangement—Berrien, Branch and Ingham fought hard. The whole scene was at once disgusting, painful, and, under certain aspects, irresistibly ludicrous. The coarse and blundering style of the correspondence on the part of Jackson and Eaton—the mutual defiance and recrimination—the challenging—the lying in wait with pistols—in short, all the circumstances of this strange transaction, taken together, resembled the quarrel among the robbers in *Gil Blas* about the distribution of the spoils, much more than a change in the administration of the government of the “freest and most enlightened nation of the globe.” Mr. Senator Marcy has since kindly informed us, in the name of the principal actor, that such in fact is, and ought to be, the character of all important politi-

cal movements. How lofty the standard of civilization which admits and even publicly justifies such proceedings! We cannot but think that if Chancellor Oxenstiern were now alive, he would change the turn of his celebrated instruction to his son, and would send him to Washington to see how *much* wisdom and virtue are employed in governing the world.

Having thus cleared the stage of one set of actors, and filled it with another, who enjoyed more of his "esteem and confidence," Van Buren accepted the appointment of minister to London, and sailed for Europe, apparently in the full persuasion that the Senate of the United States, containing a majority of members from two parties, not only politically opposed to him, but of both which he had treated the most prominent men with wanton and contemptuous indignity, would, from *mere courtesy to him*, confirm the nomination. It would be difficult to find a stronger example of the extent to which a complete absorption of every other feeling and faculty, in blind devotion to self, can obscure the perceptions of a naturally acute mind. We need not say how early and how entirely this wise expectation was disappointed. The worm that is trodden on, knows how to turn—and it was hardly to be supposed that the towering spirits from the east and west and south, who are now congregated in the Senate, having the power in their hands, would be wholly passive under the gratuitous insults which Mr. Van Buren had thought proper to bestow upon them and their friends. Independently of his disgraceful instructions to Mr. McLane, which rendered it an imperious duty to withdraw him immediately from London, his treatment of the public functionaries both of the past and present Administration had excluded him entirely from the pale of political courtesy. He was accordingly negatived without ceremony. In his answer to the letter of condolence addressed to him by some of his New York associates, he very gravely represents his case as an uncommonly hard one. That the Representatives of twenty-four sovereign States should venture for the weightiest reasons to recal Martin Van Buren from a foreign mission is a hard case; but that Martin Van Buren, a little New York lawyer, should, without the shadow of any motive but his own personal convenience, recal the whole corps of foreign ministers—remove the most valuable public servants by hundreds, and finally elbow his own colleagues out of the cabinet, is quite in the ordinary course of things. This is really the sublime of self-conceit, and as Napoleon said of the sublime in other cases—comes within a step of the ridiculous. Mr. Van Buren's reception on his arrival, and the reception of his nomination as Vice President, will

have partly satisfied him that the People are not much greater admirers of Regency politics than the Senate. It does not appear however that he is yet entirely roused from his dream of delusion. His recent nomination of Mr. SPOILER Marcy as the candidate for Governor in New York, if it be not a mere bravado, shows that he is quite insensible to the real state of public opinion.—The sentence which the people will pass at the close of this month upon that nomination, and at the same time upon his own pretensions to the Vice Presidency, will probably open his eyes, or at all events will place him where he will be for the rest of his life as harmless, and about as respectable as his neighbor Aaron Burr has been for the last thirty years.

The course pursued by the Vice President after the breaking up of the party was entirely different from that of Van Buren, and though sufficiently objectionable on other grounds, has at least something manly and generous about it. Instead of acting on the *sauve qui peut* principle, and endeavoring to secure a provision for himself out of the wreck of the hopes and prospects of the concern, he has withdrawn himself entirely from the struggle for the succession, and after the close of his present official term, will retire to private life. We trust, however, that he will appear again in Congress, where the eminent and powerful men of all parties naturally find their place, and where by meeting each other on the open field of free discussion, they correct errors, forget local prejudices, and learn to act with a broad and general view to the welfare of the whole country. Mr. Calhoun and his immediate friends now profess what we deem very erroneous notions on the economical policy of the country, and are apparently disposed to give them effect by a course of measures repugnant to the constitution, and subversive of the Union of the States. But in all these cases of supposed grievances suffered by particular states or sections, the alarm of threatened resistance has always very greatly exceeded the real danger. However imprudent may have been the language, and to a certain extent the proceedings of the Nullifiers, we can never believe that men of so much talent and patriotism will ultimately insist that the minority are to rule the majority, or will for the promotion of any sectional or personal purpose, lay violent hands on the sacred ark of the Union. We can easily excuse a little intemperate language where it evidently proceeds from the overflowing of an ardent and generous temper. We must recollect that the time has been when we too were laboring under real or imaginary wrongs, and were meditating projects little less violent than those which are now



agitated in South Carolina. In the generous phrase of Burke : *We must pardon something to the Spirit of Liberty*, and we do it with cheerfulness. We must and can cheerfully pardon any thing but undisguised and avowed corruption. We deem it a fortunate circumstance that the chief direction of the nullifying party should be in the hands of Mr. Calhoun. His undoubted patriotism will induce him at all hazards to avoid any desperate extremity, and his commanding character will give him the influence over his friends which may be wanted for the purpose of keeping them within bounds. We have said that his political career was at an end ; but we are not sure after all that he may not be reserved to render very important services to the Union. The South has no more prominent citizen to present to the people hereafter as a candidate for the highest marks of confidence which they have to bestow ; and if Mr. Calhoun should return to Congress, and, imitating the example of Mr. Clay in regard to the Missouri question, should act the part of a mediator, and employ his authority and talents in settling the questions that now disturb the public tranquillity, on any ground of fair and honorable compromise, he will find the friends of the country in all quarters entirely disposed to acknowledge the service, and to join with his immediate partisans in doing him honor as a public benefactor.

Such however were the principal circumstances and immediate results of the *explosion* in the Cabinet, which destroyed the unity of the Jackson party, and with it all chance of the General's re-election, or of the success of either of the pretenders to the succession. The new cabinet was on the whole an improvement on the former one, although each of the members was on different accounts obnoxious to weighty objections. Mr. Livingston is too old to sustain the burden of the department of State. Gov. Cass is pledged to the worst doctrines on the Indian question. Mr. McLane had allowed himself to be made the instrument of the national dishonor at London ; and Woodbury had but recently truckled in the basest manner to Isaac Hill—a depth of degradation below which no man could well wish his worst enemy to descend. Objectionable however as they on some accounts were, the people would probably have considered the change as a favorable one, had it turned out that these men were to be in fact the President's advisers. But the course of events soon disclosed the alarming and disgraceful fact that the heads of departments constitute merely the formal Government, and that the power is really lodged in a secret irresponsible cabal which has since received the appropriate and characteristic denomination of the **KITCHEN**

**CABINET.** The existence and power of this cabal have been apparent ever since the explosion, and have lately been proved beyond the possibility of question by the proceedings in regard to the Bank.

The report of the Secretary of the Treasury on this subject contained the opinion of the responsible head of the financial department; the Veto Message registers the decree of the secret council, by which that opinion was reversed.—Hitherto it has been deemed the principle of our Government and the security of our liberty that wherever there was power there was also responsibility. Now the responsible agents of the people are paralyzed, and the real power is lodged in hands which the people cannot reach. It has deserted the places of business of the President's constitutional advisers, and taken up its abode in obscure recesses, which the public eye cannot penetrate—the bureaux of subaltern clerks or the closets and bed-chambers of domestic dependents. In this respect our young Government exhibits at the present moment the worst features of the worst and most corrupt governments of the old world. This state of things is new and ominous. It deserves the serious reflection of every patriotic and well-meaning citizen.

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## CHAPTER X.

### SPIRIT OF JACKSONISM.—CONCLUSION.

IN the preceding chapters, we have rapidly reviewed the measures by which the present Administration rose to power, and have exposed in detail the unconstitutional character and ruinous tendency of their principal measures. At the close of our last essay, we stated that since the dissolution of the Van Buren cabinet, the effective power of the government had been lodged in the hands of a secret and irresponsible cabal, sometimes denominated the Kitchen Cabinet, and the "Cabinet improper." We propose to notice, in conclusion, the general spirit of the Administration as now constituted, and of the party which it represents, with the means which they employ to perpetuate their influence.

The spirit of Jacksonism, the most remarkable exhibitions of which we have separately examined and characterised, which has been distinctly perceptible ever since the formation of the Jackson party, and has become, from day to day, more and

more apparent, especially since the organization of the "improper Cabinet," is the same that prevailed in France at the worst period of the Revolution, and was then known by the name of JACOBINISM. As it then existed in France, and as it now exists in this country, it may be described as a spirit which aims at the subversion of social order and the regular and wholesome authority of law, for the purpose of concentrating the whole power of the country in the hands of a single ruler. Its Alpha is ANARCHY, and its Omega DESPOTISM. It addresses itself to the worst passions of the least informed portion of the people;—denounces the most valuable and salutary institutions as intolerably oppressive, reviles the possessors of property, talents, virtue, every thing that gives distinction and influence in society, as tyrants and aristocrats;—and when by these delusive and maddening appeals it has brought the people to acts of open violence, and broken down the existing forms of government, it erects upon their ruins a throne for the boldest pretender, commonly some daring and reckless military chieftain, who happens to be at hand at the proper moment to take possession of it. This spirit was long ago denounced by the great English apostle of the Rights of Man, under the name of LICENSE.

*License they mean when they cry Liberty ;  
For who means that, must first mean wise and good.*

It is a sort of political disease, naturally incident to free governments, because it is the result of the excess or abuse of Liberty. It has repeatedly frustrated the fairest prospects of political improvement. At the period of the first English Revolution, it deluged the island of Great Britain in blood, and substituted for a well-regulated and orderly commonwealth, the reign of violence, under the various names of the Long Parliament, Cromwell, and the Stuarts. In France it engendered the brood of political and military agitators, who have for the last half century kept that country, and to a considerable extent the whole of Europe, in a state of uproar, and prevented the introduction of the liberal constitutions which were called for by the improved civilization of the age. In this country we have occasionally seen some symptoms of it, but it has always been promptly checked by the strong good sense and patriotic feeling of the people; and although under a concurrence of peculiar circumstances, it has obtained a temporary ascendancy for the last three years, the body politic is evidently too healthy to allow it to prevail for a very long time. Already we see in every quarter the signs of a vigorous and general reaction, which is destined, we trust, within a few weeks to expel it from

the system, and to prostrate forever the imbecile and superannuated despot who has been put forward as its personal representative.

In this political disease, wherever it has occurred, there have been, as we have said, two distinct tendencies—one towards disorganization and anarchy, the other towards despotism and a concentration of the whole power of society in the hands of a single ruler. The former is generally more observable in the earlier and the latter in the later stages of the malady, but they exist together, and develop themselves as circumstances happen to furnish occasion. Both these tendencies have been distinctly visible in the operations of Jacksonism. We have seen it encouraging the encroachments of the States on the Federal Government, denying the National Legislature all their most important powers, openly defying the authority of the Supreme Court, and encouraging the States to do the same; endeavoring, in a word, to bring back the present Constitution to the imbecility of the Old Confederation. We have seen it attempting to array the poor against the rich, denouncing the possession of property, talents, distinction of any kind, under the name of *aristocracy*, as an unpardonable crime, and straining every nerve to place the whole political influence in the hands of those, who for want of education and good moral qualities, are the least qualified to exercise it. Such are the proofs of the disorganizing and anarchical tendency of Jacksonism. On the other hand, we see but too plainly in the violent and arbitrary conduct of the chief, and in the servile complaisance—the insane man-worship of his flatterers—the evidences of a tendency to strengthen the Executive branch of the Government, which, if appearances were in other respects less favorable than they are, would justly excite the most serious alarm for the permanence of our institutions.

We have had occasion in the preceding essays to dwell at considerable length upon some of the principal measures by which the party have attempted to disorganize the government, and substitute a wild anarchy for the beautiful and admirable system of social order contained in the Federal Constitution. The arbitrary tendency of Jacksonism is not less worthy of consideration. Since the organization of the “Cabinet improper,” and especially during the late session of Congress, it has displayed itself almost without disguise. In the appointment of Gwinn, the President wrested from the Senate their constitutional share of the appointing power, and if this case is to be regarded as a precedent, has taken into his own hands the whole of that most important branch of the government. He

arbitrarily returned the bill which granted interest to Maine and Massachusetts on the advances they had made during the war, while he approved that which gave the same allowance to South Carolina. He openly claims the right of executing or not executing, at discretion, the very laws which he has himself approved. He declares himself, in terms, entirely independent of the Supreme Court. He nullifies of his own mere motion a whole series of solemn treaties concluded with the Indian tribes, and the Intercourse Law, which makes it his duty to sustain these treaties, if necessary, by military force. He does in fact substantially what his own caprice happens to suggest, without the slightest regard to the letter or spirit of the constitution.

In the mean time, what is the language of the partizan prints? Are the *soi-disant* champions of State Rights and democracy alarmed at these undisguised and almost avowed usurpations of power by the Federal Executive? Quite the contrary. The persons who are clamoring most loudly against the encroachments of the Federal Government, and the influence of Aristocracy, are the same who justify and applaud every act of General Jackson. These same persons are constantly loading him with the grossest and most fulsome flattery. Napoleon at the height of his greatness did not receive more abject adulation than is daily lavished upon the imbecile automaton who is now the nominal head of our Government. The Globe tells us that he was **BORN TO COMMAND**. The Indiana Times assures us that he takes great interest in the welfare of his **SUBJECTS**. Mr. Van Buren thinks that the **GLORY** of acting under his orders, is enough to satisfy the most extravagant ambition. Finally, a late Ohio paper, after inveighing severely against the two opposition parties for having had the temerity to form a coalition in that State, as they have done elsewhere against a common enemy, remarks that "a republican form of government is quite too mild and lenient" for such offenders, and that "the despotic laws of a **CROMWELL** and a **ROBESPIERRE** would mete out no more than justice to such a combination of men!!!"

The meaning of this seems to be clear. We understand it to be, that if the party cannot retain the **SPOILS OF VICTORY** in any other way, they will be fully justified in abolishing the present republican form of government, and investing the man who was **BORN TO COMMAND**, with the dictatorial authority of a **CROMWELL** or a **ROBESPIERRE**.

Nor, extravagant as it may appear to some, do we consider the apprehension of an attempt at such a change in the character of the Government, as by any means chimerical. Should

General Jackson be re-elected, it can scarcely be doubted that the troubles in the Southern States will assume, under his capricious and violent management, a more serious shape than they now wear, and it is altogether probable that they will put on the form of actual rebellion against the Government. In that case, the President will be called upon as commander in chief of the army to suppress the insurrection. The movement of troops for this purpose would constitute the commencement of a CIVIL WAR, of which the progress and conclusion are beyond the reach of conjecture or prophecy. We only know that in preceding cases of the same description, the military commanders who have acquired distinction and influence, have frequently abused it for the purpose of usurping an arbitrary dominion over the whole or a part of their fellow-citizens. Is there any thing in the character of Gen. Jackson or his principal partizans, which should lead us to suppose that he would shrink from making, or they from supporting him in a similar attempt? Will any sober man undertake to say that he should consider the tranquillity of the country as perfectly secure, if he heard that Jackson was returning in triumph at the head of a victorious army from a successful campaign in South Carolina? Is it at all improbable that he might be induced to employ violent measures against the Nullifiers, when moderate and legal ones would have been sufficient, for the express purpose of obtaining a pretence for developing a military power, to be afterwards employed for other objects? For ourselves, without intending to excite unnecessary alarm, or to attach undue consequence to contingent evils, we are yet free to confess that we agree entirely in the sentiment so powerfully expressed by Mr. Webster, at Worcester—that the greatest danger connected with Nullification may perhaps after all result from measures adopted by the General Government for its suppression. Not that we believe that an attempt of the kind now supposed could possibly succeed. We know too well the dauntless courage and unconquerable spirit of liberty that distinguish our countrymen, to imagine that any portion of them would ever acquiesce for a moment in a violent assumption of political power by a military leader. The granite rocks of New England would stoop from their deep foundations to do homage to a Usurper, as soon as the hardy and noble-minded men who inhabit them. But the mere attempt would be the signal for internal discord, and would form the commencement of a series of troubles, which, however it might terminate, would destroy the tranquillity and prosperity of the people for at least one generation—perhaps forever.

Such are the tendencies and spirit of Jacksonism.—ANARCHY and social disorganization at the outset—Military usurpation and DESPOTISM at the close.—The means which the party employ to perpetuate their influence, have been adverted to in detail, from time to time, in the course of these remarks, and may be here briefly recapitulated in a few words. They are principally two.

1. The abuse of the patronage of the Government for the purpose of controlling the freedom of elections.

2. The abuse of the Press.

1. **ABUSE OF PATRONAGE.** This, our readers recollect, was charged upon the preceding Administration by General Jackson, and the reform of this supposed abuse was declared by himself to be one of his principal objects and duties. The charge, as made by him, was grossly and notoriously false. During the administration of Mr. Adams there had been no removals from office for political opinions. The Secretary of State had not even thought it worth his while to take the business of publishing the laws from political opponents, for the purpose of giving it to political friends. Two or three isolated cases in which this had been done for other reasons, were the only pretences which the partizan newspapers could find for the factious and senseless clamor, which they raised upon this subject. But the making of the charge, and the public declaration by Jackson that he considered the reform of this supposed abuse as one of his principal duties, increased, if possible, the strength of the obligation which he was under before, to keep his own conduct in this respect entirely clear of reproach and suspicion. How this obligation has been observed, we have already seen. It had been given out beforehand, by his partizans, that Jackson would **REWARD HIS FRIENDS AND PUNISH HIS ENEMIES.** The first acts of his administration were a general sweep from office of all the functionaries, high and low, who were not his partizans, and the appointment of others who were so to take their places. Finally, it has been publicly avowed within a few months upon the floor of the Senate of the United States, by one of the leaders of the party, the immediate friend of Van Buren, and his candidate for Governor of New York, that it is perfectly right and proper, that the offices of Government should be distributed by the President among his political partizans, as the **SPOILS OF VICTORY.**—The party not only sacrifice without scruple all regard for consistency and principle, but have at length lost all sense of shame, and openly confess and triumph in their infamy.

The subaltern leaders are about as scrupulous and consistent as the principals. Amos Kendall, for example, when he entered on his office as Fourth Auditor of the Treasury, deemed it an abuse of the patronage of Government, for the purpose of controlling the freedom of elections, even to subscribe for a political newspaper, and actually made a great parade about stopping one or two which, as he said, had been taken at the public expense, by his predecessor. He considered it his duty to keep himself aloof from politics, and attend exclusively to the business of his office. From the tone of his letter to the editor of the Baltimore Patriot, one would have supposed that he would hardly feel himself at liberty to look into a newspaper. Not long after this immaculate and scrupulous patriot became, as he has been ever since, and is now, one of the principal writers in the Washington Globe, the semi-official organ of the party, and in point of style the most scurrilous paper, with the exception, perhaps, of the New Hampshire Patriot, that has ever been published in this country. This is not all. Within a few weeks, this very Kendall, whose delicacy would not permit him to subscribe for or even read the newspapers, wrote circular letters under the frank of his office, to his correspondents throughout the Western country, for the purpose of urging them to make all possible efforts to extend the circulation of the Extra Globe. The letters have been published, and are not only not denied but openly avowed and justified by their author, who, in the way of candor, seems to have taken a leaf out of the book of Mr. Senator Marcy.

So much for the consistency and purity of Jacksonism, and so much for the reform of the abuse of "bringing the patronage of Government into conflict with the purity of elections." The degree to which this abuse is now carried by the Administration, and the extent of the influence which they exercise by means of it, are apparent. Consider the effect in the Post Office only. It has been calculated that the whole amount of the salaries paid to Postmasters, is from three to four hundred thousand dollars, distributed through the country in moderate sums, mostly from a hundred to a thousand dollars each. Notwithstanding the honorable resistance made by Judge McLean, which cost him his place, the principle was introduced at the very opening of the Administration of regarding the whole of this immense sum as a fund for maintaining and extending the influence of the party. The reward and punishment principle was immediately applied in this department as in all the others. The consequence was, that the party now possess in every considerable city, town and village throughout the Union, a salaried agent,



holding his place on the tenure of party fidelity, invested with the franking privilege, and with the official inspection and superintendence of the whole correspondence of the people. At this moment, every Postmaster in the country is, *ex officio*, an agent for the Washington Globe, and is employing the machinery of the department, as far as he is able to control it, for the purpose of extending the circulation of the odious tissue of malignity, slander, and falsehood which is issued in the extra numbers of that journal.

Does not every one feel that this single fact is enough of itself to vitiate entirely the freedom of the election? If with all these disadvantages against them the people do in fact succeed in defeating the re-election of Jackson, as we have now reason to hope and believe that they will, it will undoubtedly be the strongest proof of the irresistible effect of a general reaction of feeling against notorious and avowed political profligacy, which has yet been furnished in the history of this or perhaps any other country.

2. **ABUSE OF THE PRESS.** The other principal means by which the party maintain, as it was also the principal one by which they acquired their ascendancy, is the abuse of the Press. We have more than once adverted particularly to this subject in the preceding chapters. The period that has elapsed since the inauguration of President Jackson may be called emphatically the **REIGN OF SLANDER**. Never before, perhaps, has a case occurred in the history of the civilized world, in which the laws intended for the protection of personal rights have been so openly and systematically set at defiance, and have proved in practice so entirely inadequate to their object. A hundred presses make it their daily and regular employment to calumniate every individual who dares to make himself in any way conspicuous as an opponent of Jackson. The most important public services, the purest and most elevated private character, instead of affording any protection against this system of moral assassination, only seem to invite and direct the blow. Presidents Madison and Adams, Chief Justice Marshall, Chancellor Kent, Bishop White, Messrs. Clay, Sergeant, Webster, Frelinghuysen, Wirt; all the ablest, best and most justly respected men among us, are daily libelled in the foulest and grossest manner. Dark insinuations,—direct and open falsehood—forgery—are employed in turn as they happen to be thought most likely to effect the immediate purpose. An appeal to the courts of justice affords no redress. The people, by listening for a course of years to this constant strain of calumny and scandal, have become so much accustomed to

it, that they have in some degree lost their sensibility to the value of character, and public opinion no longer lends to the law on this subject that sanction, without which all laws are a dead letter. The consequence is, that few attempts are made to enforce it, and the inconvenience of being constantly calumniated in the newspapers, is considered as a sort of tax which every citizen must expect to pay, who devotes himself conscientiously and firmly to the service of his country.

The extent to which this system of slander is carried, has been in some instances curiously and almost ludicrously shown by the unconscious admission of the slanderer. We alluded in one of our preceding essays, to an article which appeared in the *Washington Globe* under the head of *Political Morality*, in which Messrs. Clay, Webster, and their principal associates in Congress were politely described as rascals, who ought to be lashed naked through the country—they having, it seems, been guilty of the enormous offence of supporting, in the regular discharge of their official duty, the bill for re-chartering the Bank. The editor of the *Boston Courier* copied verbatim a great part of this chapter, with such change of language as made it apply to Gen. Jackson and his principal retainers. Immediately the *New York Evening Post*, and the other leading Jackson presses raised a tremendous outcry against the *indecentcy of the opposition press!!!*

Another fact evinces singularly enough, the utter recklessness with which the hired dealers carry on their trade of calumny. About a year ago there appeared in the *North American Review*, an article upon the state of political affairs in England, which was afterwards republished at London under the title of the *Prospect of Reform*, and was received with a good deal of attention. Of all the essays that have been written upon the subject, this was perhaps the most *democratic* in its tendency. It went to show that the natural result of the present movements would be a subversion of the monarchical and aristocratical features of the British constitution, and the substitution for it of a republican government on the model of our own. This result was spoken of as not only natural but desirable and expedient. The article was accordingly quoted by the opponents of reform in Parliament, and in the journals, as containing an admission, by the friends of the measure, that such were its tendency and probable results. One would hardly have supposed that the publication of the most democratic article that had appeared upon this question would be regarded as a proof of *aristocracy*. Such however was the fact. No sooner did the Jackson editors perceive that

the article had been quoted by the British Tories, than, without stopping to ascertain the purpose, or to read the paper, they forthwith denounced the Review as *aristocratic*, and declared that the proprietors were in the pay of the British aristocracy. If Satan should quote Scripture for his purpose, Scripture would no doubt become in the opinion of these writers a very diabolical matter.

Forgery, as we have said, is one of their habitual instruments. The readers of this journal have within the last week had occasion to notice the exposure of a most base and flagrant attempt of this kind, by Mr. Jeremiah Mason, lately a distinguished Senator in Congress from New Hampshire. But we have neither space nor inclination to enlarge any further upon the details of this disgusting topic.

If in any considerable town or village in this country it were suddenly discovered that there was a building which was employed as the rendezvous of a gang of miscreants, who habitually sallied out from it, to attack the persons and plunder the property of the inhabitants, what would be the consequence? The whole community would be in an uproar:—all ordinary business would be suspended:—every active and patriotic citizen would consider his person, his time, his labor, all his means and faculties as in requisition for the public service, until the nuisance should be abated. At the present moment, there are in *every* considerable city and village in the Union one or more buildings employed as the rendezvous of a company of persons who make it their daily and habitual business to attack the citizens in their reputations—a possession far more dear to every honorable man than his person or his purse. These companies of calumniators are banded together and form an association that pervades the whole Union. Encouraged by the criminal toleration of the public, they have the boldness to call themselves a political party—they nominate candidates for public offices. At the last election they actually succeeded in choosing a President of the United States. Andrew Jackson is the personal representative of this confederacy, and the period of his administration may, as we have said, be justly described, and will be known in the history of the country as the **REIGN OF SLANDER.**

What then is the duty under such circumstances of well-meaning citizens? Is a state of public opinion, which tolerates the open invasion of private rights, of the most important and essential character, sound and healthy? Are the people innocent in this matter? No. We have already said, and we repeat that the toleration of calumny and slander is the

crying sin of the nation. **IT MUST BE REFORMED.** The Press must be purified, or the country is lost. Whatever may be the result of the present contest; whether we are, doomed to endure for another four years the sway of Jackson, or whether we succeed in placing the Government in the hands of upright and patriotic men, it is equally the bounden and imperative duty of the real friends of the country to strike at the root of the evil, by reforming the existing abuses of the Press. Let it be understood that character is not to be outraged with impunity, any more than person or property. Let it be understood that the slanderer is to suffer in his person and property the appropriate legal punishment for slander, and that this is to take place steadily, uniformly, regularly, in every instance until the plague is stayed. Let citizens of weight, influence and principle, those who take the lead with so much honor and success in other philanthropic and patriotic enterprises, put their hands to this great work, and it may easily be done. If it be not, we shall have no security, should we even put a temporary period to the present misrule, against the early recurrence of a similar one, and the standard of civilization will be gradually degraded, until the country will no longer be a suitable residence for men of correct feelings and upright character.

Such are the two principal means by which the Administration endeavor to maintain their influence—the *abuse of patronage*, and the *abuse of the press*.—There is yet a third, more odious and alarming than either of these; too revolting to be long dwelt upon, but which ought not to be wholly passed over in a view of the conduct of our present rulers, and that is

**3. PERSONAL INTIMIDATION.**—We have said that the period which has elapsed since the usurpation of Jackson might be called with propriety the **REIGN OF SLANDER**:—the last year has been, without a metaphor, and in the direct and literal meaning of the term—especially at the seat of Government—the **REIGN OF TERROR**. It was predicted, by Mr. Senator Benton, long before the election of General Jackson, that if he were ever made President, the Representatives of the People would be compelled in self-defence to go armed. The prediction has been verified to the letter. During the last session of Congress, no member who dared to lift up his voice with freedom against the abuses of the Government, felt himself secure for a day from personal violence. One was actually assaulted for words spoken in debate, and on appealing for redress to the House of Representatives, obtained from the

party majority a mockery of justice that rendered the injury still more galling and outrageous. Another member was attacked upon the steps of the Capitol, and only succeeded by superior physical strength and dexterity in saving his life from the most imminent peril. So notorious was the countenance given to these outrages by the party majority, that Mr. Arnold did not even think it worth his while to lay his case before the House. When a third member who had been challenged for words spoken in debate appealed for protection to the House, the party majority coolly passed to the order of the day. In a fourth case, when a member was personally outraged on the floor of the House, the matter was passed over without the least notice. Towards the close of the session, the seat of Government became in a word a sort of bear-garden:—challenges, duels and personal assaults, were the order of the day:—bludgeons, sword-canes, and pistols, had taken the place of all other arguments. In the mean time, the President, who, to use his own language, knows how ‘to look with complacency on blood and carnage’—heard with apparent satisfaction the report of these proceedings, and coolly remarked that a **FEW MORE INSTANCES OF THIS KIND WOULD TEACH THE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO BE MORE GUARDED IN THEIR EXPRESSIONS.** If the People are as intelligent as we believe them to be, it will not require a *few more instances*, nor a *few more speeches* of this kind to teach them,—however they may differ in opinion upon some other questions,—who ought NOT to be President of the United States.

We have now completed, according to our feeble ability, the task, which, with much reluctance and under a strong sense of public duty, we had imposed upon ourselves. No individual can be more strongly impressed than we are with the importance of maintaining social order, and, as one of the means for effecting this end, of giving, on suitable occasions, a fair and candid support to the persons who are invested, for the time being, with the administration of the Government. But when these very persons, the selected and sworn guardians of social order, are themselves its principal enemies, and employ their official influence to break down the institutions upon which its preservation chiefly depends, it then becomes the bounden duty of every well-meaning citizen to oppose their continuance in power. Towards the present incumbent in the chief magistracy we have no unfriendly feelings, excepting such as have been excited by his conduct in the administration. Up to the time

of his election to the Presidency, we had entertained a more favorable opinion of him than was perhaps common among judicious men, and had publicly defended some of his proceedings which were considered obnoxious to serious objections, but which admitted, as we thought, a better construction. We regarded his elevation as a most dangerous experiment; but we indulged a hope that the evil might not turn out so great as was generally expected. His administration has not merely disappointed the faint hopes of doubtful friends, but more than realized the worst apprehensions of his worst enemies. His election has proved, what some who are now his strongest political partizans foretold that it would be, a *curse to the country*; and, if repeated for another term, will in all probability be its ruin. We have made such feeble efforts as lay in our power to avert this catastrophe. We are aware how entirely ineffectual any thing that we can say or do must be in determining the political movements of this great people; but if the arguments which have been urged in these remarks shall have made an impression upon the minds of a few readers only, they may not, in the present divided state of the country, be entirely without some practical effect. With the fullest conviction of their justice and importance, we submit them to the consideration of our fellow-citizens, of whom we now respectfully take our leave.

















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